

the chronicle

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Yobs force landowner to shut path

A landowner has closed off a popular walkway because he is "sick and tired" of hooligans, arsonists and motorbikers causing a nuisance.

The route through Roundhill Wood in Hagley has been shut by Lord Cobham following a spate of fires and anti-social behaviour and although it is not a public right of way, ramblers say they have been using the route for 25 years.

But Lord Cobham, who owns Hagley Hall and the surrounding grounds, has barricaded it off because he is "sick and tired of hooligans causing a nuisance".

Members of Halesowen Ramblers Association are looking to take legal action to get the path reopened as it has been in public use for so long.

Lord Cobham said he was willing to work with the ramblers to come up with a solution but has warned it could take months.

Gangs

He said gangs of youths on motorbikes had been congregating in the area near the Wychbury Hills.

He added: "We have had a lot of problems with people on motorbikes and gangs setting fire to trees. I have had to close off the path to stop them and also because it is simply too dangerous for people to go walking up there. It is my long-term ambition to open the grounds up to the public but I am being forced into this by yobs ruining it for everyone."

Derek Hill, a member of Halesowen Ramblers, said the path was an "important part" of routes for the group's 180 members. He added: "We could help out and monitor the situation and report any vandalism that we see. I can understand the problems but I don't think it is fair for this path to suddenly be closed."

Fire crews and police recently warned that the ancient trees in Wychbury Hills were being put at serious risk by the blazes.

Christopher Charles Lyttleton, the 12th Viscount Cobham, said he was seeking legal advice about access to the path.

Decision over Titanic anchor

A replica of the Titanic anchor, forged in the Black Country almost a century ago, will take pride of place in its home town of Netherton after councillors agreed to create a permanent monument to recognise the connection.

Campaigners had fought to ensure that the 16-ton anchor would return from its temporary base at the Black Country Living Museum to Netherton.

Dudley Council's development control committee voted to approve the plans for its return. The 18ft anchor will be taken back to be positioned in the old market place near Netherton Arts Centre.

The anchor was built as part of a Channel 4 programme delving into the history of the construction of the famous passenger ship.

It had been originally positioned in the market place, now a garden, on a temporary plinth at the end of filming for the show.

But the anchor was moved to the Black Country Living Museum while discussions were held about its permanent location.

Committee member Councillor Geoffrey Southall said there was a case to delay the moving of the anchor to explore the costs involved with displaying it in an upright position.

But committee members decided to instead stick with the original plans.

Assaults, weapons and drugs among problems

1,300 PUPILS SUSPENDED BY SCHOOLS

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Almost 1,300 pupils have been suspended from schools in the Dudley borough since the start of the year over issues ranging from assaults on teachers, theft to criminal damage and bullying, latest figures show.

Education bosses in Dudley have revealed 1,295 students were temporarily excluded and a further 45, all from secondary schools, expelled. The exclusions were for bad behaviour between January and July this year.

Six excluded were caught carrying a knife to school. A total of 21 were caught with drugs or alcohol. Another 302 assaulted a fellow pupil and 53 assaulted an adult on school grounds, with eight permanently expelled for assault.

Bullying led to 36 students being suspended.

Special

The number of suspended pupils represents around 2.9 per cent of the total number of pupils in the borough. There are 44,584 students at primary, secondary and special schools in Dudley.

Council education boss Councillor Liz Walker said the decision to exclude a pupil, either permanently or temporarily, was "never taken lightly".

"While these figures are high, and nobody likes to see these figures, schools have to act in the best interest of all their pupils," she said.

"When you have children taking drugs and alcohol and bringing knives on to school grounds it is very worrying."

"We get some of the best exam results in the West Midlands - and part of that is the attitude that every child has the right to learn without disruption from others. Schools do take a strong line and discipline is enforced, but it is only as an ultimate sanction after every other avenue has been pursued."

Council officers said they could not name the schools where pupils had been excluded until the end of the year due to the small numbers involved, to protect the identity of the students. In 2010, a total of 1,453 pupils were suspended and 60 were expelled.

Pub gives a boost to hospice

A pub packed in the punters for a fundraising day in aid of Stourbridge's Mary Stevens Hospice.

Chris Foxall, landlord of The Crown in Hagley Road, Stourbridge, has organised the annual event for the past six years.

During that time the fun day has raised more than £38,000 for the charity.

And this year, it is hoped the event will have raised more than £7,000 for the hospice.

There was entertainment from an array of local groups who provided the musical entertainment while there was also an auction conducted by Dudley Council leader Les Jones, a tombola and a barbecue.

The hospice's fundraising development manager Janet Jones said: "Chris has proved to be a long-standing and committed supporter of Mary Stevens Hospice and we are most grateful to him and to his friends and regulars for organising this event."



Dan Haynes, Pete Richards of Stourbridge band The Sounds of Silence, and Mary Stevens Hospice volunteer Karen Shakespeare

Metal thieves steal swings and slides

Swings, slides and a climbing wall have been stolen by metal thieves from a children's play area in a Halesowen nature reserve.

The play equipment was cut down by thieves who struck overnight at the toddlers play area at The Leasowes, off Mucklow Hill.

The theft was discovered by staff when they arrived at work on Tuesday morning.

Two swings, two slides, a climbing wall and a chain bridge were stolen.

It is thought the offenders used a disk cutter or angle grinder to chop the equipment down from their frames before taking them away in a vehicle.

Council chiefs say they believe the equipment may have been taken to be sold on for scrap.

Demands

Metal thefts have been on the increase across the Black Country in recent months as prices and demands rise. Businesses, homes and churches have all been targeted by thieves.

Chairman of the Friends of Leasowes Park, Marianne Diller called the thefts "dreadful" news for the park and residents.

"I'm not sure how much this scrap metal would fetch in money but the equipment was so much more valuable to the community and to the park," she said.

"I'm really sad to hear about this as the playground is much used by children and their families and is one of the main attractions for the park." Council chiefs said workers were yet to estimate the cost of the damage but it could cost the authority thousands of pounds. Dudley Council culture chief Councillor David Stanley, added: "I can't believe that people can stoop so low."

Meeting offer on medical waste

The boss of Dudley's Russells Hall Hospital has offered to meet residents following further complaints about medical waste being dropped outside their homes.

People living near the site say using bandages, doctors' diaries and disposal tubs for sharp instruments such as syringes are continually being left behind by staff parking in residential streets. Earlier this year an investigation was launched after confidential patient notes and syringes were found. Residents say they are still finding waste on a weekly basis.

Father-of-three Nicholas Bate of Kingswinford Road said: "We had a letter from the hospital saying that they have a strict policy on the disposal of opened medical items, but it's still happening."

"It's a real concern as it's dangerous for children and dogs walking along the paths and grass."

"We have thrown the soiled bandages away but have kept some of the other things as evidence."

"I go out once a week to clear it up as it looks like such a mess. This has been going on for seven years now."

Chief executive of Dudley Group of Hospitals Paula Clark vowed to investigate the problem, urging residents to contact her about their findings and to keep what they find.

She said: "We would be very happy to meet with the residents concerned, and would ask them to bring the items found so that we can investigate further." In October council chiefs will vote on plans to impose restrictions on streets surrounding the hospital in a bid to stop staff parking there.

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Library is venue for history talk

A series of talks at Halesowen Library will launch on September 28 with David Baker who will be speaking on the history of the Black Country Museum.

On October 26, Terry Church will speak about growing up in a Black Country Village and, on November 23, John Billingham will present his collection of images of Worcestershire.

Keith Clenton's subject on January 25 will be a walk through Birmingham city centre.

Region's students celebrate another year of top marks

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There were joyful scenes for thousands of students in Dudley and Wyre Forest as schools in the region reported another record year for GCSE results.

For the seventh consecutive year, the Ellowes Hall Sports College in Lower Gornal recorded improved results, with 97 per cent of students gaining five or more A* to C grades with 74 per cent also including English and maths.

Headteacher Mr Andy Griffiths said: "I am extremely proud of all of our students. Their hard work and dedication have obviously paid dividends."

He added: "I wish them all every success for the future."

Meanwhile, Baxter College in Habberley Road, Kidderminster, saw the number of students gaining five A-C grades rise to 93 per cent – up 13 per cent from six years ago.

Celebrated

Headteacher David Seddon said it was "like winning the World Cup."

Castle High School in St James Road, Dudley, also celebrated a record-breaking year with a 25 per cent rise in the number of students getting at least five A*s to Cs, up to 87 per cent, and 46 per cent getting the grades including English and maths – a rise of two per cent.

Headteacher Michelle King said: "We are very proud of our students. Their commitment and hard work has paid off and we wish them all the best for the future."

And 50 per cent of students at the Wordsley School in Stourbridge got five A*s to Cs including English and maths, up from 46 per cent last year. Headteacher Mike Lambert said pupils had worked "incredibly hard".

At Redhill School in Stourbridge, 76 per cent of



Callum Gadd and Heather Whale with fellow Windsor High School students Lucy Cox, Chris Nzacahayo, Lauren Homer, Emma Simpson, and Richard Chilvers

pupils achieved at least five A* to C grades including English and maths, and students at Old Swinford Hospital were celebrating an impressive 97.5 per cent rate of grades A* to C, a 2 per cent increase on last year, with 93.75 per cent including English and maths.

Council education boss Liz Walker was herself waiting to find out her granddaughter Philippa's results – and said she was "delighted" with the outcome today.

"I know staff and students across the borough have all worked very hard to get the results we

are seeing and I'm really pleased," she said.

Smiles, hugs and cheers of joy echoed through the halls of two Dudley schools today as this year's crop of GCSE students celebrated their results.

Surgeon

At High Arcal School in High Arcal Drive, Sedgley, 50 per cent of pupils achieve five GCSEs between A* and C, including English and maths.

Among them was head boy Joseph Dutton, aged 16, of Monument Lane, Sedgley, who

achieved six A*s, three As and five Bs. He is heading to the sixth form, aiming for a career in pharmaceuticals.

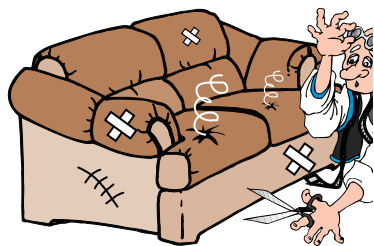
Meanwhile at Windsor High School, Halesowen, student Heather Whale, 16, of Hunt-intree Road, achieved seven A*s, two As and a B. She is hoping her stellar results are the first step towards a career as a surgeon and will be doing her A-levels at King Edward VI College in Stourbridge.

"I was really nervous and I didn't get much sleep last night," she said.



Celebrating their results are High Arcal deputy head girl Charlotte Barnfather and head boy Joseph Dutton

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Workers face cut in redundancy payouts

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Workers at Dudley Council leaving through redundancy could see their severance payout cut.

Employees have the right to a payment if they are made redundant and have two years continuous employment with the council.

The amount of the redundancy payment is calculated using a statutory formula, which is based on age, length of service and salary which is multiplied to calculate the final payout. That is now set to be changed which will lead to lower payments for those leaving the authority.

Bosses at the cash-strapped authority want to get rid of 427 posts by next April and around 350 have already left the council through voluntary redundancy. Around 25 have also gone through compulsory redundancy.

Discretion

Councillor Tim Wright, said: "Local authorities have the discretion to have an enhanced severance scheme and Dudley uses a multiplier to calculate severance payments."

"This has been reviewed in light of the current economic climate and the proposal is to reduce it from 2.2 to 1.5. The reduction will lead to a saving, in terms of the costs associated with future redundancies."

He added: "This proposal is that this will come into effect for all staff, including teachers. The same multiplier is used for both compulsory and voluntary redundancies."

Bosses say the cannot yet calculate how much money the changes will save the local authority.

Couple's diamond celebration

A Black Country couple who met in Scotland have celebrated their diamond wedding anniversary.

Colwyn and Bessie Claves, of Croft Street, Wall Heath, marked 60 years of marriage by enjoying a special meal with their family.

The couple met when Mr Claves, then 19, was on National Service with the Black Watch regiment at Fort George, near Inverness, Scotland. His future wife was working at the base's store when they met.

The couple moved to Mr Claves' home town, Rowley Regis, in 1951 and were married at St Giles Church.

They lived at his parents' home in St Giles Avenue but then bought land in Croft Street, Wall Heath, in 1959. Mr Claves, a bricklayer by trade, built the home they still live in today.

His wife worked at the Dudley branch of Marks and Spencer for many years.

The couple have sons Robert, 56, and Ian, 52, and five grandchildren.

Mr Claves, now 80, said: "It has been a wonderful celebration. Our family treated us to a meal and we had a fantastic time."



Diamond couple Colwyn and Bessie Claves celebrating their 60th anniversary

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£27m Tesco store to open in October

Volunteers in big clean-up



Cleaning up are Dudley Community Safety Team commissioning manager Bob Dimmock, Sgt Rachel Turner and Michael Tatcher of the Probation Trust

Around 60 community-spirited volunteers took to the streets of Lye for a litter pick. The team started from Valley Road Youth and Community Centre and cleared up litter from the surrounding roads.

Residents were helped by volunteers from the Big Clean Up project in Netherton, which regularly organises litter picks to improve the community.

Dudley Council spokesman Phil Parker said the event was part of a series of activities called Operation Teamwork taking place in Lye to encourage people to help their neighbourhoods. Housing advice and tips on preventing burglaries

were also available during the event. Property marking kits were handed out to help both deter burglars and make it easier to identify people's belongings.

People could also register their mobile phones on a national database called Immobilise which helps police identify the owner of lost and stolen phones. Also available were free fire risk assessments for people's homes which identify potential dangers and offer solutions.

Representatives from The Dudley Community Safety Team and West Midlands Probation Trust were also on hand to talk to visitors.

A £27 million Tesco superstore being built in the Black Country will open in October – more than a month ahead of schedule.

The supermarket near Burnt Tree Island on the Dudley-Sandwell border has been given an opening date of October 17 and recruitment will begin soon.

Bosses had previously expected the store to open in November. Around 80 new jobs will be created by the supermarket which is expected to boost total job numbers to nearly 400.

And construction firm Bowden and Kirkland said work on the scheme was now progressing quickly with the outside of the building nearly complete.

Hoardings placed around the site since building work started earlier this year are also now being taken down for landscaping to begin around the new building.

Landmark

More than 1,400 tons of steel has been used in the construction of the store, which is extensively clad in wood. The store has gradually become a new landmark and can be seen from around a mile away as motorists approach along the Birmingham New Road.

Tesco spokesman Mike McGee said: "We are planning to open the store around mid-October with a date of October 17 in place at the moment. Even if there were to be a delay it would not be much later than this."

"Recruitment at the store will be starting soon to fill the vacancies which are available."

Site manager for the construction firm Phil Gibbs said: "Part of the hoardings around the site have already come down for the landscaping so people passing can get a glimpse of the site."

"It is really starting to look like a supermarket complex now."

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Recycling scheme looks set to spread

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A plastic and cardboard recycling trial could be rolled out to the whole of the Dudley borough in a move that would save the council £500,000-plus a year.

Environment bosses say increasing the amount of recycling carried out would drive down incineration costs. A trial has been operating at around 11,000 homes in the borough for the last six months.

The council says there has been a positive response from residents.

The authority says it would need to invest in new refuse lorries as well as recycling bags and boxes for homes but the spending would be covered in the increase in revenue from the recyclable materials collected, estimated to be around £500,000.

The reduction in incineration costs would save around £530,000 a year.

Extend

A report has been drawn up and a decision on whether to extend the trial will be made later this year.

Director of the urban environment John Millar says in the report: "The benefit of rolling out this service would be an increased recycling rate."

"This in turn will see an increase in the amount of recycling income received and also a decrease in the amount of waste sent for disposal."

Councillor David Stanley, said: "The trial has proven a great success and there are many advantages of extending it to the whole borough."

"We will now be analysing the data collected during the trial before making a decision."

The report will go before the environment scrutiny committee on September 7. The council already collects glass, cans and papers.

The trial began in October and was carried out in different parts of the borough including Brierley Hill, Pensnett, and Kingswinford. The overall average participation rate was 86.9 per cent across the borough.

Rock night hits 300 notes



Ross Pickett, of Bilston, from Eyes of the Raven, and Darren Welborn, of Castle Vale, from Undue, with other musicians at the fundraiser

Rock music filled a Dudley pub as nine bands took to the stage to help raise money for a good cause.

The fundraiser, held at The Lamp Tavern on Saturday night, generated more than £300 for The Sophie Lancaster Foundation, which aims to combat prejudice after she was murdered for dressing up as a goth.

Hundreds attended the event which ran from 2pm to midnight.

Entertainment promoter Shaun Roberts, aged 46, of Wollescote, said it had been a great success. "We had a lot of people come through the doors and I am pleased with how it went," he said. "I am hoping that I can make it an annual event."

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Sinner a good comedy lately?

A drama group will chronicle a disastrous day in the life of a businessman, in their latest production No Dinner for Sinners.

The Community Players will be performing the comedy at the Oakfield Centre, in Brettell Lane, Brierley Hill, from September 7 to 10.

The play follows a bad day in the life of trader Jim Watts who is visited at his home by his boss Bill McGregor.

Unfortunately for bachelor Jim, his boss likes his employees to be married. Jim tries to convince Bill he is married – with disastrous results which only get him deeper into trouble.

Community Players spokesman Mike Harris said: "It is an excellent play and we are hoping people will support the production. We have been working hard for the past five months and we can't wait to perform it in front of an audience."

All shows start at 7.30pm and tickets are priced £6 or £5 with concessions. Tickets and other information is available by calling 01384 394349.



Community Players Claire Lax, Thelma Harper and Peter May in rehearsal

£255,000 injury aid site officially opened

A charity, which helps dozens of people in the Black Country battle back after brain injuries, has celebrated the official opening of its new £255,000 base in an old church.

Dudley's former Vicar Street Methodist Church has been turned into the new home of the Headway Black Country centre. Headway previously had rented premises in Wolverhampton Street but, thanks to generous donations and grants, was able to buy and refit the former church on the junction with Martin Hill Street specifically for its own needs.

The new £255,000 centre welcomed people for the first time in April and was officially opened by Mayor of Dudley Councillor Michael Evans last week. And Wolves players Karl Henry and Jody Craddock took time out of training to help with the celebrations. The footballers were guests of honour at the centre, where they signed autographs at a special open day.

Activities

Headway Black Country development manager Sue Bullas said: "The new premises have two training rooms, a computer suite, a quiet room, a spacious office with a brand new fitted kitchen as well as a garden."

"We have got so much more space to provide more activities and hopefully we will be able to extend our opening hours to serve our service users and their families who come to us from Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton as well as here in Dudley."

Midfielder Henry said: "We were more than happy to help raise the profile of the charity."

Leanne Wilkinson, aged 28, from Wednesbury, who has been attending the charity's sessions since February, said: "I come here twice a week – it's brilliant. Everybody is very supportive."

Nadine Price, of Walsall, who suffered a brain injury in 2005, said: "I hope others like myself are given the opportunity to come here and improve their life following brain injury."



At Headway are Wolves stars Karl Henry and Jody Craddock with Dave Jones, William Maybury, Sharon Raybould and Nadine Price

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Select the 'set up' or 'installation' option. If you see picture icons, select the tool box, satellite dish or spanner. If you are prompted for a code, try 0000 or 1234.

Select the **full re-tune** option. This is sometimes called 'first time installation', 'factory reset', 'default settings' or 'shipping conditions'. Do not select 'channel update' or 'add channels'. Press 'OK' if your equipment asks if you want to delete all your channels. Don't worry, this is normal.

Channels will automatically be installed. This may take a few minutes and your equipment may shut down and restart.



These instructions are a guide only. Product specific instructions can be found at digitaluk.co.uk/retuning.

For more information on re-tuning call 08456 50 50 50

get set for digital

*Includes BT Vision or Top Up TV equipment. Any sets receiving satellite and cable TV will not be affected by this change. Calls are free for BT customers within inclusive calling plans. Call charges from other providers may vary.

Death of former college lecturer ruled as suicide

A former college lecturer suffering from inoperable cancer killed himself by fixing a bag over his head and handcuffing himself, an inquest heard. Alan Hobday, aged 51, was found at his home in Ox Street, Upper Gornal, on May 23 after police were called by friends unable to contact him.

Dudley Coroners Court heard the front door was unlocked and Mr Hobday had been found lying on his bed still in his pyjamas.

A suicide note was found. The former history lecturer, who worked at Halesowen College, had also made arrangements for his beloved pet cats to be cared for by his ex-wife.

Black Country coroner Robin Balmain recorded a verdict of suicide.

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Restrictions stay in place for Morrisons

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Plans to lift restrictions on delivery times at a Kingswinford supermarket have been thrown out amid fears over noise. Residents near Morrisons, in Stallings Lane, were angry after bosses submitted proposals to get restrictions axed.

The retailer wanted to remove a condition preventing deliveries from being made to the supermarket before 8am and after 8pm Monday to Saturday. It also wanted rules stipulating no deliveries before 10am and after 6pm on Sundays and bank holidays to be lifted.

The move would have allowed lorries to unload goods at any time of the day – which residents claimed would make their lives a nightmare.

But Dudley Council has refused the application saying the supermarket had not provided enough evidence showing removing the conditions would not impact on nearby homes.

Noise

In a letter to the authority, one resident of Birchwood Walk said: "This planning application would allow Morrisons to take deliveries at all hours of the day. I object to this. Already the noise created from the delivery lorries is bad, so to allow them to deliver at anytime would be unbearable."

"It is especially bad during the summer when we have our windows open."

Director of Urban Environment for Dudley Council John Millar said: "The applicant has failed to provide sufficient evidence removal of this condition would not cause undue harm to the amenity of neighbours living nearby caused by noise generated from the delivery process. Therefore the application has been refused."

"Without the submission of sufficient evidence the condition should remain to protect neighbours from undue noise which would be associated with deliveries."

Morrisons spokesman George Kotschy said: "We are always looking to better the service we offer for our customers. As part of this we look for any way to make our stores more efficient."

Sarah's bead on success



Artist Sarah Jones has moved into Studio Seven at the Red House Glass Cone

Three years ago, teaching assistant Sarah Jones decided she needed a hobby and began searching for an art class she could take part in. But none of the painting, sculpting and other craft courses really seemed right – until she encountered a glass bead workshop at the now-closed International Glass Centre in Brierley Hill.

Now, the mother-of-three is a qualified lampwork glass artist, working five days a week creating and selling her own beads and has moved into a large studio at the Red

House Glass Cone in Wordsley. "I fell in love with it instantly," said Sarah, aged 41, of Milton Road, Coseley, who still works two days a week at Woodsetton School in Sedgley.

She then linked up with another glass student, Jane Ellis, of Norton, and they eventually decided to go into business together.

Part of the Made at the Cone collective of designers, the pair can be found in Studio Seven every Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday.

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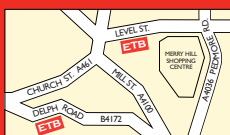
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A look inside the modern living room in one of the flats



Work is almost finished on the £7 million project

First look at housing scheme for over 55s

This is the first glimpse inside a multi-million pound housing development replacing a former council care home in the Black Country.

Workers are putting the finishing touches to the £7 million Willowfields housing scheme in Coseley.

Final decorations are being completed and workers are moving furni-

ture into flats at the scheme built by construction firm Midlands Heart.

The development is made up of 72 one and two-bedroom flats aimed at people aged 55 and over.

A number of features have been built which bosses at the housing company say will make life easier and safer for tenants and residents. Bathrooms have been fitted with double hinges meaning they can be opened both ways.

LEDs are positioned on bathroom

light switches to make them more easily noticeable.

Director of New Business and Development at Midland Heart, Carl Larter, said: "Willowfields will provide much needed independent accommodation for the over 55s in Coseley."

The project is the second to be given the go-ahead in Dudley after a 132-home project was completed earlier this year in the Russells Hall area of the town.

Nominate your unsung heroes



Stars of volunteering from left, are Marcia Blake, Ann Cook, Bev Cole, Simon Wilkes, Terry Potter, James Horton and John and Pam Pestana, with, front, Eileen Fielding, of Dudley Volunteer Centre, and Mayor Michael Evans

The stars of a poster campaign for Dudley volunteers swept into town to launch the 2011 awards for unsung heroes.

People who scooped honours in last year's Dudley Volunteer Awards now feature on posters calling for nominations for this year's competition.

They joined the Mayor of Dudley, Councillor Michael Evans, for the launch in Coronation Gardens, outside the Council House in Priory Road, Dudley.

The event is run by Dudley Council for Voluntary Service (CVS), and the posters - asking "do you know a volunteer with star quality?" - are displayed in town centres and community buildings.

One of the stars, Terry Potter, 71, of Upper Gornal, goes litter picking at 6am in High Arcal Park, Sedgley, and does other voluntary work locally.

The closing date for nominations is September 26. See www.dudleycvs.org.uk or call 01384 573381 for details.

Problem with site hits homes

A scheme to build new council houses in Dudley has been scaled back after borough bosses realised part of the site cannot be built on.

The scheme at Blackthorn Road, Wordsley, was due to include 20 properties which are being built on land which used to house a garage and bungalow.

Now bosses say only a dozen homes can be built on the site - six two-bedroom houses, and six three-bedroom properties. They are part of a series of homes going up, the first council homes in Dudley for almost 20 years.

Councillor Adrian Turner, cabinet member for housing, libraries and adult learning at Dudley Council, said: "A planning application has been submitted to revise plans for Dudley Council's Blackthorn Road new build scheme."

The new application seeks approval for amendments to the scheme's layout as further investigations and ground works by contractors have shown that part of the site is not suitable to be built on.

Position

"This means the council is now in a position to develop 12 properties as opposed to 20."

The 12 properties will be developed at the front of the site along Blackthorn Road.

The waiting list for a council house in the borough stands at just over 7,600, including existing tenants looking to transfer to a new property.

Work is under way at five sites after the council secured £4.3 million in funding from the Government's Homes and Communities Agency.

The sites include a 19-property development on a former council garage site on Wood Road, Lower Gornal. This includes two, three and four bedroom family houses and apartments.

A 22-property development is being built on a former council-owned plot on Norwood Road, Brockmoor.

A six-property development is being built on a former garage site on Tenacre Lane, Upper Gornal.

And a 13-property development is going up on a garage site and former council compound at Woodland Avenue, Quarry Bank, which includes two-bedroom family houses, two bedroom bungalows and two bedroom apartments.

Diabetes champions ready to help improve care for patients

A group of diabetes champions have been enrolled at The Dudley Group of Hospitals to help improve the care of patients with diabetes during their stay in hospital.

The 22-strong team is supporting the specialist diabetes team to teach staff how to use diabetes monitoring tools and help patients manage their blood sugar levels.

Dr Haroon Siddique, a consultant in diabetes and endocrinology, said: "We know that patients who have diabetes will spend more time in hospital than patients without diabetes. Greater awareness among our staff and our new way of working has already improved the care."

Auction held for charity

Football memorabilia and Dudley Zoo tickets will be among the lots at a charity auction in the Black Country.

It will take place at Parkes Hall Social Club in Sedgley on September 9 from 7.30pm. Tickets cost £5 for adults and £2.50 for children. To book call 07891 848119. All money raised will go to Cancer Research.

High rise group plans next residents' meeting

Tenants of Dudley Council who live in high rise flats are being invited to discuss issues relating to their estates at a dedicated meeting. The High Rise Living Forum next meets on September 6, The Lodge, Wellington Road, Dudley from 7 to 9pm. Call 01384 815168 for information.

Churchyard work begins

Volunteers are needed to lend a hand as work starts to clear the grounds of St John's in Kates Hill, Dudley.

To help contact Deb Brownlee of St John's Preservation Group on savestjohnschurch@hotmail.co.uk

Air heroes remembered

The heroes of the Battle of Britain will be honoured with a service and parade in Dudley this month.

Dudley Council will remember the heroes of the battle on September 11. The day will include a service at St Thomas and St Luke's church, a parade by borough Air Training Corps and the laying of wreaths at the cenotaph in Ednam Road.

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Teenagers took boat on joy ride

Two men helped to steal a 18ft fishing boat before taking it for a "joy ride" along a one-mile stretch of a Black Country canal, a court heard.

Adam Cooper, aged 19, and Jamie Tranter, 18, were part of a group of six who took the blue, cuddly boat out of the compound where it was stored and through seven locks on July 3.

Prosecutor Miss Kelly Hale told the court the boat had been brought to the Stourbridge Canal at Wordsley for renovation. "The defendants collectively took the boat

down the canal through a series of seven locks for about one mile."

"When they couldn't get through one of the locks, they took the boat out of the water, walked around the lock and put it back in the water," she added. Miss Hale said the boat had ended up being set on fire but there was no evidence suggesting the group had been involved.

Captured

Cooper, of Ridgeway Road, Wordsley, and Tranter, of Swan Lane, Wordsley, were captured on CCTV with the boat and pleaded guilty to taking a conveyance without consent at Dudley Magistrates' Court

where they received 12-month conditional discharges. They were also each ordered to pay compensation of £65 and court costs of £85. Mr Michael Davies, for Cooper said: "They seem to have thought it was a good idea to take this boat down the canal for a joy ride. It started off as harmless fun but my client accepts it wasn't." Mr Malcolm Fisher, defending Tranter, told the court the boat had been used by the group to rescue a cat. He added taking the boat had been "totally out of character" for Tranter.

Four other teenagers also pleaded guilty to the same charge.

£520 donated to first aid service

Shoppers at a local supermarket have donated £520 to St John Ambulance.

Volunteers held a collection at Morrisons in Stallings Lane, Kingswinford. Charlotte Parker, from St John, said: "Every year, up to 150,000 people die when first aid could have saved them."

Actors share 139 roles



Actors Georgina Lovell, left, Gareth May and Jane Williams who are taking lead roles in *The 39 Steps*

Eight actors will take on 139 roles between them when they take to the stage for a spoof version of a classic thriller. Dudley Little Theatre will perform John Buchan's *The 39 Steps* at Netherton Arts Centre, Northfield Road, from September 7 to 10.

But while the production remains true to the original novel it is also a light-hearted take on the Alfred Hitchcock film version. And it will be a particular challenge for the small cast who not only perform the main and secondary roles but also all of the supporting characters. Only minimal props are used in the production with most of the play conveyed through dialogue.

Man is guilty of attack

An electrician injured another man by hurling a glass at the back of his head during a disagreement at a Black Country club.

Steven Boyle, 42, emptied the contents of the glass before throwing it at his victim in a "spur of the moment" attack. Wolverhampton Crown Court heard.

Boyle, of Areal Street, Sedgley, denied a charge of unlawful wounding but was found guilty following a trial. The court was told the attack had taken place at Gornal Labour Club on November 27 last year.

The victim suffered a 4cm cut to the back of his head. Boyle was sentenced to 12 months imprisonment suspended for two years, ordered to carry out 250 hours unpaid work and to pay his victim £1,000 compensation. He will also have to pay legal costs of £2,000.

Bridal show at centre

A bridal show is to be held at the Merry Hill Centre in Brierley Hill next month.

Taking place on September 24 and 25, it will be held on specially erected marquees on the centre car park.

There will be more than 80 exhibitors showcasing venues as well as wedding suppliers of cakes, flowers, marquees, chairs, suit hire and mother of the bride outfits. Companies which can provide cars and entertainers will also be on hand.

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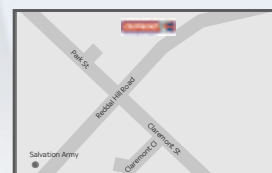
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Region's care home pensioners are left in limbo

Hundreds of elderly residents in care homes run by stricken Southern Cross have been left in limbo after landlords missed the deadline to transfer them to new operators.

Union GMB said Southern Cross had told it care home owners would find new operators by August 1 but most in the West Midlands will now not be transferred until November 1 – the day after Southern Cross is wound up.

Bosses said they were committed to

continuity of care for residents. Southern Cross employs 44,000 people nationally and runs some 19 care homes in the Black Country and another six in Staffordshire.

Residents are in the dark over the future of homes such as Ashbourne in Dudley, Riverside, Holbeche House in Kingswinford and Fernwood Court in Walsall, which are owned by a company called Bruchmen. The company declined to comment.

Homes in Aldergrove Manor in

Penn and Bellevue Court in Woodcross are among 12 in the Black Country owned by property investment group NHP Ltd. The company is planning to run a number of homes itself.

Continuity

Director Jeremy Jensen said: "The operation of Southern Cross homes owned by NHP will be transferred to a new operating company on November 1. NHP is working closely with leading

care company Court Cavendish to establish the new operating company. In the meantime the homes owned by NHP continue to be managed and operated by Southern Cross.

"The continuity of care for residents remains our number one priority."

Amanda Gearing, GMB regional officer for the West Midlands, said: "The shambles that is Southern Cross rumbles on because apparently the landlords still cannot get their act together after pulling the plug last

month on Southern Cross. Quite why the landlords as the owners of the buildings should be running the show is as mysterious as it is unacceptable."

Councillor Lesley Faulkner, cabinet member for adult, community and housing services at Dudley Council, said: "We do continue to work with colleagues at a regional level through the association of directors of adult social care to ensure appropriate contingency plans are in place."

Hygiene food guide is served up online

Diners are being encouraged to make use of a food hygiene scheme when eating out in Dudley.

Scores on the doors is a food hygiene ratings scheme which allows residents to access the official hygiene ratings of restaurants across the borough, all at the click of a button.

By logging on to the Dudley Council website at www.dudley.gov.uk residents can find out how hygienic and well-managed the food preparation is at their favourite restaurant.

The online search results will provide a star rating and description, the standard of hygiene and safety, compliance, cleanliness of the facility, confidence in the management and the date the inspection took place.

Compulsory inspections are carried out on a regular basis across the borough. Environmental health officers ensure that there is no risk to public safety by checking that standards of food safety and hygiene are being maintained.

Councillor David Stanley, cabinet member for environment and culture, said: "This scheme is easy to use and it will help residents to make an informed decision about where they choose to eat out."

Library to host a census day

People in Wyre Forest can find out more about their family history at an event in Kidderminster later this month.

The Wyre Forest Historical Research Group will hold a free computer workshop on September 9 at Kidderminster Library. The session is called Discover Your Personal Heritage with the 1911 Census. The event is free, but booking is essential, on 01562 746370. The workshop starts 2pm.

Trampoline course put on at centre

SPECIAL trampolining courses in Dudley will have people jumping for joy this year.

The courses, held at Crystal Leisure Centre, will run from September to December on Mondays, Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays. Every session will be led by a qualified instructor, who will help participants enjoy themselves while also being active.

Councillor David Stanley, cabinet member for environment and culture, said: "This is just one of the many courses and classes which run at the leisure centres. There are so many activities, clubs and fitness sessions there will be something to keep everyone busy this autumn."

Junior trampolining, suitable for beginners and improvers aged five to 15, will run on Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays and for children as young as three on Saturdays.

The advanced sessions, only open to children aged five to 15, will take place on Mondays from 6pm-7pm. The courses, which last for 13 lessons, cost £58.50, or £54.60 for under fives.

Adults can also join in, with a class for people aged 16 and over running from 7pm-8pm on Mondays, with the 13-lesson course costing £68.90.

A 50 per cent discount is available to Options+ leisure discount holders. For information visit www.dudley.gov.uk/sport or call 01384 812800.

RSPCA welcomes ban for cat killers

RSPCA officers have welcomed sentences for two women who "systematically" drowned four cats in a bath in a Sandwell flat. Samantha Browning and Sophie Bird were last week each handed an 18-week suspended sentence after carrying out the cruel act in a flat in Greenlawns off St Marks Road, Tipton.

Browning and Bird were both banned from keeping animals for 10 years when they were sentenced for the crime at Sandwell Magistrates Court. They were also ordered to do 180 hours unpaid work and were made subject to a two-year-supervision order.

Magistrates also ordered the defendants to pay £483 costs each to cover the RSPCA's investigation bill.

Calie Rydings, from the RSPCA, said: "The key thing is they have been ban-ned from keeping animals."

"The sentences send out a clear message people who behave like this should not have access to animals."

The court heard 21-year-old metal

sorter Browning, of Mason Street, West Bromwich, held the cats under the water after job-less 18-year-old Bird, who now lives in Gammage Street, Dudley, filled the bath. Browning admitted causing unnecessary suffering to a protected animal.

Mr Nick Sutton, who prosecuted both cases, said: "As an act of cruelty it is difficult to imagine one more sustained and calculated."

Failing

The court heard Browning and Bird had returned from a party, where they had been drinking and taking drugs, when the offences happened some time between January 1 and February 17.

The deaths came to light after a suspicious message was written on social network Facebook. Bird admitted failing to ensure the welfare of four cats.

Mr Jim Cooper, defending her, said: "She takes full responsibility and is ashamed and remorseful. She was 17 at the time living hand to mouth with no income."

"She played no part in the physical act because she could not face doing it but saw it as a way out of her predicament and she accepts she is equally culpable."

Caitlin's a real water babe

Water baby Caitlin Morris has caused a splash by swimming unaided across the nine-metre width of a pool – aged just two.

Caitlin, from Stourport, could swim before she could walk and her doggy-paddle-style got her across the width in 47 seconds.

Caitlin, who lives with her mother, Tracey Girling, father Roger Morris and five-year-old brother Callum off High Street, Stourport, achieved her time during a weekly lesson with the Baba Seahorse swimming school in the pool at Kidderminster's Holy Trinity School.

David Salt, Caitlin's instructor at the Baba Seahorse classes, said: "Quite rightly Caitlin's parents are very proud."

Miss Girling, aged 39, said: "Caitlin started learning to swim when she was nine months old – and she didn't walk until six months later."

"I'm not a very confident swimmer and I wanted to make sure she was safe."



Two-year-old swimming sensation Caitlin Morris in Stourport Sports Centre baths with her mother, Tracey Girling

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Decision set for flood site homes project

Plans to knock down a business park and build more than 200 homes near the River Stour in Stourbridge will go before council planners in October.

Working industrial units at Sunrise Business Park in Wollaston High Street and nearby land off Lowndes Road and Bradley Road would be emptied and replaced by up to 215 two

and three-storey houses. Councillor Colin Wilson, chairman of Dudley Council's planning committee, said councillors were expected to meet on October 31.

The controversial plans have sparked concerns from nearby businesses who have claimed the development would be a "recipe for disaster", labelling the proposals "woefully inadequate".

The land neighbours both the River Stour and Stourbridge Canal – and after two major floods in recent years, traders say the development will make matters worse.

A flood risk assessment carried out as part of the application reveals 30 per cent of the site is at a high risk, with more than one per cent chance of flooding, while 65 per cent is at a medium risk.

Reached

David Millward, director of Evans & White Manufacturing Ltd, which has been in Bradley Road for more than 60 years, said waters had reached more than 2ft deep in his workshop.

"The area where they want to build houses – where they want to put families and children – is basically one big flood plain."

"I find that very concerning," he said.

He said he was also worried about residents complaining about noise from his factory.

Nobody from site owners Revelan Plc was available for comment.

Groups are looking for actors

Four theatre companies which meet at a Halesowen school are seeking actors to join their ranks.

Dudley Performing Arts groups meet at Barls High, Furnace Lane, and are appealing for new members to join in September.

Junior Buzz Youth Theatre is for seven to 11-year-olds and meets on Thursdays from 4.30pm to 6pm.

A new group, The Senior Buzz Youth Theatre, for 11 to 15-year-olds will meet at the same time on Thursdays.

The Buzz Theatre Company also meets Thursdays from 6pm to 9pm and is for those 15 years and above. The NAC theatre group meets on Wednesdays from 7pm and is for ages 12 to adults.

For details call Sheila Chamberlain-Hyett or Rachel Sharpe on 01384 813904.

Meeting for local tenants

Council tenants who live in high rise properties are invited to discuss issues relating to their estates at a dedicated meeting.

The group discusses many issues relating to living within a high rise block.

The next meeting is on September 6 at The Lodge, Wellington Road, Dudley from 7pm to 9pm. Call 01384 815168 for details.

Salon scheme

Plans to turn a former Cantonese restaurant into flats and a hairdressing salon have been submitted to Dudley Council. Developer SEP Properties bought Shanghai Fusion, Dudley.

Vet appeal over cat

Distraught staff at a Dudley vets' practice have appealed for help in finding their own beloved cat Jack, who has been missing for weeks.

Jack, now aged 17, has been at Blacks Veterinary Group in Hall Street for 15 years since he was brought in injured after being hit by a car.

He was never claimed and has become a favourite in the surgery, much loved by staff and visitors alike.

Practice manager Val Marsh said he disappeared weeks ago.

"Everyone is just distraught – he's like our own pet and we're desperate for him to come back," she said.

"We wonder whether he jumped into a client's car or got trapped somewhere but we just don't know."

Jack is black with some grey fur. Anyone who thinks they may have spotted Jack can Val on 07968876503 or 01384 823510.



Receptionist Jo Handley and veterinary nurse Emma Adams appeal for their lost practice cat Jack

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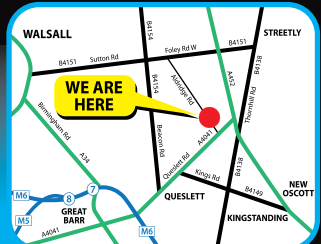
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Food bank needs to double for demand

dudleychrons@expressandstar.co.uk

A Black Country food bank says it needs to double in size in the next six months to cope with demand from needy families. More than 3,500 people have been helped by the Halesowen Black Country Food Bank in the last six months.

The figure is up 45 per cent on the same time last year. Bosses say they need to acquire another 5,000 sq ft of warehousing space and have launched an appeal.

Food Bank co-ordinator Wendy Fryatt today said: "Over the next six to eight months we are going to have to find more space.

"We can't afford rents but if people were willing then we would be able to keep empty units secure and would, of course, step aside if they had tenants wanting to come in."

The charity has already expanded its operation to provide clothing services and supplying toiletries.

Variety

But Miss Fryatt says the organisation is also now trying to provide more help and support services to deal with the variety of reasons why people are facing poverty.

"We are not just a soup kitchen, we try to find out what could be the underlying problems and we want people to come to us and tell us how we could help them in any way."

She added the problems were more obvious in the school holidays as parents struggle to feed their children when they are at home for the six-week break.

The food bank gives families three days worth of food and other provisions.

People have to get a voucher to collect the goods from agencies including Age Concern and the Probation Service.

Around 25 volunteers give their time each week to help at the centre. Several others drive vans and run distribution centres.

Since the food bank was launched, it has given away the equivalent of more than 10,000 meals.

It is designed as a short-term measure to give people going through a crisis some breathing space.

Jazz knows her onions



Keeper David Zebedee with the once-favourite onions that are now back on the menu for first-time mother orang utan Jazz at Dudley Zoo

Pregnancy put a favourite vegetable well and truly off the menu for Dudley Zoo's Bornean orang-utan, Jazz. But four months after giving birth the 19-year-old has rekindled her fancy for onions and once again made the vegetable part of her five-a-day. Primate keepers at the attraction were amused when the first-time mother

shunned the shallots and opted for soft fruits and salads instead.

Head of media and communications Jill Hitchman said: "Jazz has always loved her onions but keepers noticed early on in her pregnancy she couldn't face them and cut them out of her diet.

The youngster – named Sprout by keepers – is feeding well.

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Tense psychological drama by the master of suspense... David moves in with his new partner but events occur which put his sanity in doubt - nothing seems to be as it should be as tensions mount, so - can their relationship survive?

PROOF by David Auburn *The Nonentities in The Studio*

Mon 26th to Sat 31st March 2012

The death of a brilliant but unstable father precipitates family problems. Estranged siblings at odds over the legacy of notebooks and the potential horror of how much of his madness or genius will his daughter inherit.

MY BOY JACK by David Haig

Mon 14th to Sat 19th May 2012

Beautifully written and poignant drama as Rudyard Kipling pulls strings to send his myopic son to the First World War. A bitter family conflict leaves him torn by his two great passions: love for his children and devotion to King and Country.

LES LIAISONS DANGEREUSES by Christopher Hampton

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Stylish seduction of an innocent young girl. Elegant manners and beautiful costumes in this stylish but bitter drama. Powerful account of the pursuit of pleasure, corrupt sexual manners and manipulation.

DON'T DRESS FOR DINNER by Mark Camoletti

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DAISY PULLS IT OFF by Denise Creegan

Mon 18th to Sat 23rd June 2012

Hilarious spoof of every girl's story you ever read! Plucky scholarship girl Daisy battles snobbish wealthy girls, unmask a mysterious stranger, discovers buried treasure, wins the hockey match and leads the choir in the school song. A ripping end to our birthday season!

thechronicle

Homes plan on site of former public house

A Stourbridge pub could have served its final pint after plans were revealed to transform it into a family home. The Cottage Inn was sold recently to housing developer Churchill Retirement Living.

The firm recently finished building a retirement village neighbouring the pub, in Enville Street, just outside the town's ring

road. Bosses say residents held concerns about the noise and behaviour associated with the use of the pub. This prompted the company to buy the pub. It had been placed on the market by brewery Marston's.

Plans have been submitted to Dudley Council for a change of use to allow the pub to be used as a residential home.

The proposal is to convert the existing premises into a four-bedroom family-sized house. Works to remove the bar, alter the design and access statement issued by the firm, designers say existing signs will be removed and one of the front doors will be blocked up to create space for a window.

In a design and access statement issued by the firm, designers say existing signs will be removed and one of the front doors will be blocked up to create space for a window.

Access

The pub's rear smoking area and outdoor toilet will be removed and garden steps rebuilt to give better access.

A new garage with two parking spaces and three extra parking spaces for Churchill Retirement property owners are also part of the plans.

In a statement submitted with the plans, a firm spokesman said: "The reuse and refurbishment of an existing building offers an opportunity to provide a sustainable development of a modern family-sized dwelling on previously developed land."

Dudley Council's planning department will take a decision on the proposal in the next few weeks.



Mansell's trainee of the year Carole Millward

Carole is top trainee

A Dudley woman has been named top trainee at construction company Mansell after nearly a decade with the business.

Nine years ago Carole Millward joined the Stourbridge-based Western region of Mansell Construction as an administrator in the estimating department.

Now she has been named as Mansell Trainee of the Year. Carole was given the award after joining Mansell's technical trainee programme as a trainee estimator. She has completed her BTEC National Certificate in construction and is now in the first year of study for the HNC in construction at Walsall College.

She said, "I really enjoy learning new things and I would encourage anyone who has the opportunity to embrace the training offered to them."

Mansell regional managing director, Steve Davies, said "We are really proud of Carole's achievement."

Park gets new play equipment

Contractors have installed new equipment in a play area near Halesowen as a thank you to people for putting up with months of disruption.

The toddlers' play area at Waseley Hills Country Park, near Romsey, in Halesowen, has been re-vamped by the National Grid who have carried out work on the overhead power cables and pylons which feed Birmingham.

Following the completion, National Grid carried out work to the site and made a donation to Worcestershire County Council countryside service as compensation for the disruption caused.

This money was used to pay for the new kit in the toddlers' play area.

Worcestershire County Council countryside sites officer George Hammonds, said: "We are very grateful to residents and users of the site for their patience."

Special display museum event

Visitors can take a look at a special armoury display at this year's Rock and Fossil Festival in Dudley.

It features a collection of helmets, body armour, blades, chain mail and axes. It is part of the festival which takes place at Dudley Concert Hall and Dudley Museum and Art Gallery on September 24 and 25.

There will be stalls selling fossils and jewellery, talks from geology and palaeontology experts, bird box making, a magician, Dudley Zoo's small animals, a glitter tattoo artist, fossil casting and a woolly mammoth will also be at the event.

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Town treatment date changes top 90,000

More than 90,000 hospital appointments were re-arranged in Dudley in 15 months – with some patients given up to 10 new dates.

A new system to reduce the number of rescheduled and cancelled outpatient appointments is now being trialled at the borough's three hospitals.

Talk date at history club

A history group will hear about the heritage of Ironbridge when an illustrated talk takes place at its next meeting.

Amblecote History Society meets on the second Wednesday of every month at the Church Hall, in Vicarage Road, Amblecote, from 7.30pm.

New members can join by attending one of its meetings.

The next event will be held on September 14 and historian Brian Draper will detail Ironbridge's history.

Talks will also be held on October 12 and November 9.

Rock lifestyle will be subject

A talk on the historic Rock Houses of Kinver will be held at Kingswinford Library on September 14. The talk, presented by David Bills, will begin at 2.30pm focusing on the history of the rock houses at Kinver Edge, home of the last known cave-dwellers in Britain.

Admission is £1 for members and £2 for non-members, with refreshments available.

Enter the dragon



Rebecca Bayliss and 10-year-old sister Abigail meet Ed the bearded dragon who lives at Dudley Zoo

Young readers at Gornal Library were rewarded for their hard work by getting the chance to see animals up close.

Children taking part in the summer reading challenge got the chance to attend the event which featured a visit by animals from Dudley Zoo.

Keepers brought a bearded dragon, white rat, snake, guinea pig and cockroaches to the Abbey Road library

for the youngsters to see and touch. More than a 100 youngsters have taken on the challenge of reading six books over the holidays.

Librarian Alison Bryant said it had been a wonderful event and the children had enjoyed meeting the animals and learning about them.

"It was very exciting for them to see the animals up close," she said. "It is all part of our summer reading challenge."

Almost half of the slots were changed with less than six weeks' notice by bosses at the Dudley Group of Hospitals, with staff annual leave being one of the reasons for the postponements.

Between April 2010 and June this year, there were 93,902 appointments which had to be re-arranged.

Patients were given less than six weeks notice for 40,888 of these slots.

During the period, 18 patients had their appointments rescheduled more than five times and one patient had their slot changed on 10 occasions.

Paula Clark, chief executive of the Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust, which runs Russells Hall and the Guest in Dudley and the Corbett in Stourbridge said: "A pilot is currently under way to 'partially book' patients.

"This means they are added to a waiting list and only invited to contact the trust six weeks before they should be seen. This should significantly reduce the numbers rescheduled."

Howzat for name?

A road name planned for Brierley Hill will have a cricket theme because it overlooks a cricket ground. It is proposed to call a development of 22 properties being built off Norwood Road, The Wickets.

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| | 19.00-20.00 | Boxercise |
| Tuesday (* Additional cost) | 18.00-20.00 | Kickboxing* |
| | 18.00-19.00 | Zumba |
| | 19.00-20.00 | Weights Circuit |
| | 20.00-21.30 | Fitness Yoga |
| | 20.00-22.00 | Ju-Jitsu* |
| Wednesday | 18.00-18.30 | Aerobics Blast |
| | 18.30-19.30 | Pump |
| | 19.30-20.30 | Pilates |
| Thursday | 18.00-18.30 | Gym Machine Workout |
| | 18.30-19.30 | Circuit |
| | 19.30-20.30 | Zumba |
| | 20.30-21.30 | Miss Fitted Dance Adults |
| Friday | 18.00-19.30 | Fitness Yoga |
| Saturday (* Additional cost) | 9.00-9.30 | Cardio Blast |
| | 9.30-10.30 | Pump |
| | 11.00-12.00 | Kickboxing* |
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Thieves in chase are fined

Two thieves who stole scaffolding from a building site before hurling the poles out a car window during a police chase have each been fined £100.

David Jukes, aged 24, and Matthew Southall, 20, targeted the old Wordsley Hospital site in Stourbridge, which is being converted into new homes.

They loaded 20 scaffolding poles into a Ford Fiesta before being driven around Dudley and Stourbridge.

The pair, who pleaded guilty to theft, were fined £100, and ordered to pay £250. Some poles were hurled out of the car during the chase, Dudley Magistrates Court heard.

Jukes of Rookery Road, Wolverhampton, and Southall of Netherby Road, Sedgley, were seen dismantling the scaffolding at about 12.20am on June 23 and, when police arrived, the car had already driven off.

A police car then followed it as it went up to 50mph along the A491, Kingswinford High Street and side roads. The car even went round the island at Holbeache Road the wrong way.

Mrs Marion Bibb, prosecuting, said: "One would presume the two passengers were responsible."

Then the vehicle lost control in Braithwaite Drive, Kingswinford and the three men ran away.

Jukes insisted he did not throw the poles, said Mr Sunil Jagasia, defending. Mr Andrew Preston, defending Southall, said he had made the "wrong decision" to join his friends. Andrew Hollihead, 24, of Brough Close, Lanesfield, admitted his part in the theft. He will be sentenced at a later date.

Boss is 'left in the dark' over the future of store

The boss of a frozen food chain says he feels "left in the dark" about the multi-million pound revamp of a Stourbridge shopping centre which will see his store forced to move out of its premises.

Cooltrader will have to leave the Crown Centre when it is demolished ahead of a £50-million redevelopment project and the construction of a new Tesco supermarket.

But the firm's managing director, Andrew Errington, said he was still waiting to be told by Tesco when the store will need to close.

It comes as travel agent Thomas Cook reveals it is looking at relocating from its premises by the entrance to the Crown Centre. Mr Errington said despite Cooltrader's uncertain future, the business was doing well and shoppers were continuing to visit the store, which is the last remaining shop in the main part of the centre.

dudleychron@expressandstar.co.uk

Mammoth walk



Lucy and Andy Griffiths at the finish marker

TWO headteachers at schools in Dudley have completed a mammoth 630-mile walk.

Lucy and Andy Griffiths put organised each stage of the walk, and finally completed it after six years. They followed the South West Coast Path National Trail, which starts at Minehead in Somerset and ends in Poole in Dorset.

Mrs Griffiths said: "We enjoyed it so much we're going to do it again as we can't bear the thought we wouldn't be going back to those beautiful places, but we're going to take a year off first and do some sailing instead." The trail is Britain's longest path, and is the equivalent on walking up and down Mount Everest four times. Mr Griffiths is head of Ellowes Hall Secondary School while Mrs Griffiths is head of Jesson's C of E Primary School.

Mr Errington has said the firm, which also has branches in Brierley Hill and Kingswinford, is keen to remain in Stourbridge.

But he said: "We've been left in the dark. We haven't been told yet what's happening. We are the only shop left but we are doing all right."

Meanwhile Thomas Cook confirmed it was looking at options for moving to the Ryemarket area of the town. Tesco spokesman Jonathan Simpson said the company was "ironing out" the final details before work could get under way.

"As soon as everything is sorted we will be contacting everyone involved," he said.

Cabinet member for regeneration Councillor Angus Adams said: "As soon as we have a start date for the works we can assure all traders, businesses and shoppers in the town that they will be informed."

"These are very exciting times for Stourbridge as we await the biggest regeneration project for the town in decades and we appreciate that people are keen to know details as soon as possible."

"We are hopeful that this development will increase footfall in the town and act as a catalyst for further investment."

Giant cabbage's stalk of the town

Great-grandfather Tony Southall is the toast of his allotments – after growing a corker of a cabbage, which weighed in at 25lb 2oz.

But now he thinks he is about to unveil an even bigger one at Amblecote Allotments' Horticultural Show in Stourbridge on September 3.

Tony, aged 74, of Barbrook Drive, Lakeside, Amblecote, revealed the secret of his success in growing such a whopping Cornish Giant cabbage, which he began to cultivate in March.

"I swear by liquid comfrey to feed my cabbages – it's a herb and it smells like rotting vegetation," he said. "I also put a bucket of wee in the compost."

Tony, a widower, who is a retired engineer, showed his cabbage with a 5ft diameter, at the allotment's open day last week.

"It was blessed heavy," he said. "I have heard of people who say they've grown a 60 pounder – but saying it and seeing it are another thing and I wouldn't always trust what a vegetable grower says."

A visitor who guessed that Tony's weighed 25lb – only 2oz out – won a bottle of whisky. And the cabbage was later donated to be eaten by residents of a care home.

"The one I'll be putting into our show at Amblecote Royal British Legion on September 3 looks even bigger – but I won't say the weight I think it is because it will be up for another guess," he said.

Tony, who has had his 148sq ft allotment



Vegetable grower Tony Southall with another of his amazing Cornish Giant cabbages

for 13 years, last September grew a 136lb marrow – and this year he has another that he thinks should tip the scales at anywhere up to 230lb. He is also nurturing extra-long runner beans, as well as carrots, cauliflowers, parsnips and other vegetables.

And Tony confesses he does talk to his plants – warning them "if you don't grow, you're on the compost heap."

Plans for store are on table

New locations for a planned multi-million pound new supermarket in Dudley town centre are being considered.

Talks have been ongoing between Dudley Council and major operators for months in a bid to bring a retailer to the area.

Council bosses had hoped the store could be built on land on Tower Street but say after receiving "feedback" from retailers they are now also considering land in Flood Street and Cavendish Quarter.

Councillor Angus Adams, cabinet member for regeneration at Dudley Council, said: "Extensive market testing has been completed which has confirmed that there is strong operator demand for a new supermarket in the town centre."

Coffee shop gets go-ahead

Plans to install a Costa Coffee outlet at the Merry Hill Shopping Centre in Brierley Hill have been given the go-ahead.

The unit would be built in a space near the Carphone Warehouse store. A planning application for the scheme has been approved by Dudley Council.

Classroom plan pulled

Plans to erect a temporary classroom at a Sedgley primary school have been withdrawn.

An application had been lodged for the classroom at St Chad's School on Catholic Lane.

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On day 1 we call at Chester before continuing to the Blackpool area. Tickets have been included for the Ken Dodd 'Happiness' tour.

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Jersey • Norfolk Lodge Hotel

Jersey boasts miles of soft sandy beaches and secluded coves. The Norfolk Lodge Hotel, St Helier, features an indoor swimming pool.

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10 October from £279.95



Glorious Guernsey • L'Eree Bay Hotel

5 Days • 4 Nights: 10 October from £299.95

Oban, Mull & Iona • 3* Columba Hotel

The coastal resort of Oban in the West Highlands features a busy harbour and great views. The 3* Columba Hotel has a prime location on the sea front. It is a striking Victorian building with a handsome exterior and home to a wealth of facilities including a bar, restaurant and café.

Included excursions:

- Isle of Mull & Iona
- Fort William

5 Days • 4 Nights:
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North Devon Delights

Enjoy a break in North Devon - a delightful mixture of dramatic coastline and magnificent moorland scenery coupled with unspoilt resorts, bustling market towns and quaintly named villages. We stay for 2 nights on a dinner, bed and breakfast basis at the Royal Hotel. This is situated overlooking the beautiful village and bay at Woolacombe.

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- On day 3 a visit to the Atlantic Village Shopping Outlet

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- Free time to enjoy the delights of Scarborough

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5 Days • 4 Nights: 05 December from £169.95

Liverpool • Adelphi Hotel

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Price Includes:

- 2 or 4 nights dinner, bed and breakfast accommodation
- 3 hours free bar each evening
- Splendid cabaret entertainment
- Visit to Southport
- On 5 day break - visit to historic Chester
- Free time to enjoy Liverpool

3 Days • 2 Nights: 11 & 25 November from £99.95
5 Days • 4 Nights: 31 Oct, 21 & 28 Nov from £179.95

Bournemouth • Britannia Hotel

Stay at one of the Britannia Hotels in the delightful resort of Bournemouth.

4 Day break includes:

- 3 nights dinner, bed and breakfast accommodation
- 1 hour free bar each evening
- Visit to beautiful New Forest and Chichester

5 Day break includes:

- 4 nights dinner, bed and breakfast accommodation
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- 2 excursions featuring Salisbury, Poole and Weymouth

4 Days • 3 Nights: 19 December from £99.95
5 Days • 4 Nights: 31 October from £169.95

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- 2, 3 or 4 nights dinner, bed and breakfast accommodation
- 3 hours free bar each evening
- Sparkling cabaret entertainment
- Visit to historic Bruges, (Christmas markets should be in full swing from 02 December)
- On 4 & 5 day breaks a visit to Canterbury Christmas Market

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A Taste of Southern Ireland

Lawlors Hotel

The idyllic fishing villages, historic castles and emerald green hills of southern Ireland are the destination for this tour. We stay at the popular Lawlors Hotel which overlooks the harbour. It offers elegant décor, comfortable rooms and good food served in a stylish restaurant.

Included excursions:

- A visit to the mediaeval city of Kilkenny
- A visit to the thriving maritime city of Waterford - the capital of Ireland's sunny south east coast. Continue to Tamore - a traditional seaside resort.

5 Days • 4 Nights: 19 September from £199.95



French Riviera

3* Mercure Hotel, Grasse

Be swept away by the opulence and sophistication of the glamorous Côte d'Azur. On this sun drenched stretch of coastline are luxurious resorts and Mediaeval villages where the mountains seem within touching distance and the sea forms a mosaic of greens and blues. We stay at the charming town of Grasse - the world capital of perfume. The 3* Mercure Hotel is set in the centre of town. Features include a bar, restaurant, terrace and outdoor swimming pool.

Optional excursions:

- Nice and Menton - £15 pp
- Monaco & Monte Carlo - £15 pp
- St Tropez and scenic coastal drive - £15 pp

Special Offer: Book all 3 excursions for just £40 pp
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Rest and relax amidst some of Europe's most enchanting alpine scenery. We stay at the 4* Trend Hotel Fortana. This is set on the outskirts of the charming village of Fieberbrunn in the heart of the Kitzbühel Alps. Rooms are comfortably furnished with private facilities, balcony and terrace. Features include a restaurant, bar, sauna, steam room, solarium and indoor pool area. Your stay will be on an 'all inclusive' basis with the following features:

- Buffet breakfast, lunchtime snack and dinner, packed lunch will be provided on some excursion days
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- Selection of beer, wine, soft drinks and local spirits from approx. 10am until midnight daily

Included excursions:

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Optional excursions:

- Visits to Koblenz and the picturesque town of Cochem - £9.95 pp
- Rudesheim - £9.95 pp

Special offer: Book both excursions for just £17.95pp

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Ostend has it all - miles of sandy beaches, delightful promenade, sea front pavement cafes, colourful markets and bustling shops. We stay for 3 nights on an each night there is a free bar with local draught beer, red or white wine and soft drinks between 20.30 hrs and midnight.

Optional excursions:

- Pretty Dutch border town of Sluis with its traditional cog makers and working windmill then onwards to the historic town of Bruges - the 'Venice of the North' - £9.95 pp
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4 Days • 3 Nights - 09 December from £189.95

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12 Sept Great Yarmouth - Norfolk Broads
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12 Sept Scottish Majesty - National Hotel, Dingwall
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16 Sept Bournemouth, Swanage & New Forest
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3 Days • 2 Nights from £99.95

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3 Days • 2 Nights from £89.95

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Choice of top West End shows
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19 Sept Rhine & Wine Free Bar Break
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19 Sept Taste of Southern Ireland - Lawlors Hotel
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thechronicle

Pneumonia took the life of addict

A drug and alcohol addict left severely brain damaged following an overdose more than two years ago died of pneumonia, an inquest heard.

James McCormack, aged 33, was left in a permanent vegetative state after suffering the brain injury in 2009. He died on July 26.

Dudley Coroners Court heard his carers at the Bridgewood Mews care home had called in a GP after they noticed a paper tube used to feed him had started to leak. He died in Dudley's Russells Hall Hospital.

Addict threatened to kill woman's pet cats

A drug addict who threatened to kill a woman's cats when she walked in on him as he burgled her house is now behind bars. Gavin Smith, 29, of Windmill End, Netherton, was sentenced to four years.

At Wolverhampton Crown Court on August 24, he admitted raiding two homes in Buffery Road, Dudley. Recorder Mr David Herbert said the cats were "very dear" to the woman, and told Smith he had left her badly traumatised. The court heard that in May the woman walked into her house to see Smith running down the stairs. Mr Paul Reid, prosecuting, said she had been "absolutely terrified" and asked him: "You haven't hurt my cats?" He shouted back: "Quick or I will kill your cats", took her purse and ran out.

Driver is fined for snatching camera

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A motorist who tried to snatch a digital camera from a parking warden after being issued with a ticket has been handed a fine of £80 by the courts.

Tyrone Mathew Fellows, 30, attempted to physically take the camera from the warden after he was given a penalty charge notice. He was caught parking illegally in Castle Street, Cosely, on April 15.

Fellows, of Flavell Street, Woodseton, pleaded guilty to a charge of assault when he appeared before Dudley Magistrates Court.

He was fined £80 for the assault and ordered to pay court costs of £160, leaving him with a total bill of £240.

Dudley Council today said it was satisfied with the sentence handed out to Fellows.

Abuse

A spokesman said it was hoped the result of the case would send out a clear message that parking wardens were not "targets" for abuse.

Officials at the authority also confirmed that Fellows had paid the parking fine in full prior to the assault charge coming to court. Parking wardens carry digital cameras as a matter of procedure to take pictures of offending vehicles before a ticket is issued, according to the council.

The parking warden, who has not been identified, did not wish to make a comment following the court hearing which took place on Tuesday.

Cabinet member for transportation on the council, Councillor Patrick Harley, said he hoped the case would serve as a warning.

"I am pleased to see this prosecution has been carried out as behaviour of this kind is simply not acceptable," he said.

"People need to be warned that physical assault will not be tolerated and could, in some cases of course, even lead to custodial sentences."

Comedian in town pub gig

A comedian who has supported TV star Alan Carr will headline an event at a Black Country pub. Anthony J Brown takes to the stage at the Comedy Hut, at The Mitre in Stourbridge on September 7 at 7.30pm. Tickets are available from the venue.

Office chair set on fire in street

An office chair was set on fire and rolled down a road in the middle of the night. Stourbridge firefighters were called to Wentworth Road, Wollaston, shortly after 11pm on August 24 and found the chair burning in the street. The culprits had fled the scene.

Plans are withdrawn

Plans to erect a temporary classroom at a Sedgley primary school have been withdrawn. An application had been lodged for the classroom at St Chads School on Catholic Lane.

Teen warned on breach

A Black Country man who skipped probation appointments to go "partying" with friends has been told he faces prison if he breaches the order again.

George Gill, aged 19, of High Street, Brierley Hill, missed two appointments with his probation officer, ordered as part of a 12-month supervision order attached to a suspended sentence.

District judge Graham Wilkinson told him he must finish the order and obey a new eight-week curfew, as well as pay £50 costs. "You think it's alright now you have finished the first part of it to go off partying and you have chosen to breach it," he told him. "Make sure you abide by this order religiously otherwise I will send you to prison."

Ale fans bowled over by success of beer festival



Social secretary Tasha Vahey and Sam Cooper enjoying the beer festival

Roadworks to finish early

An 18-month programme of roadworks in Dudley town centre, affecting more than 60 streets is running ahead of schedule, council bosses have said.

The scheme, which is being carried out by gas, electric, water and telecommunication companies and co-ordinated by Dudley Council, began in April and is due for completion next autumn.

The council said that work to Stafford Street, one of the busiest routes through the town centre, has already been completed a week ahead of schedule and the road has reopened.

The next phase of the scheme will see workers moving onto nearby Wolverhampton Street for 10 weeks from September 26.

Quickly

Bosses say that in a bid to minimise disruption and keep traffic moving the roadworks will be phased.

Councillor Patrick Harley, cabinet member for transportation, said: "By managing and co-ordinating the works with our utility company partners we are managing to complete them quickly and efficiently."

"We will continue to work closely with our traders and shoppers to keep everyone informed and minimise disruption."

"We apologise for any inconvenience that may be caused to people in the town centre as these critical works are carried out and would like to thank everyone for their patience."

The programme will affect a total of 64 streets in the town centre.

A story of sex, rock 'n' roll and lousy decision making

KILLING BONO (PG)

Based on Neil McCormick's autobiography this tale of fate, sex, drugs, rock 'n' roll and being the worst decision maker in the world is too bizarre not to be true.

This is the story of two Irish brothers Neil and Ivan McCormick, played by Ben Barnes and Robert Sheehan respectively, who miss the chance to be part of the world's biggest band.

Neil makes a decision for Ivan, unbeknown to his brother, when Bono offers to make him part of the burgeoning rock group that eventually goes on to be U2.

After making this cataclysmically stupid decision Neil, with Ivan in tow, sets out to make it in the fickle world of the music industry determined for his own part to be a success and to cover his own tracks so his brother never finds out how he determined his fate.

Nemesis

The brothers and their band struggle while all the time Neil is reminded of his nemesis, Bono et al, growing to be a global phenomenon playing stadiums all over the world, while they struggle to fill local community halls.

As they move to London and become more and more enmeshed in the seedy world of the industry, their journey is further complicated by being bankrolled by a local Dublin murderer played by Bill Bailey lookalike Ralph Brown, who is keen to see a return on his investment.

Throw into the pot a predatory, homosexual landlord, camped up wonderfully by an obviously ailing Pete Postlethwaite; a music promoter who is here today and gone tomorrow and doesn't even like rock music, and a psychotic henchman who, although not too bright, has a penchant for using guns and you have a surreal journey that exposes the vagaries of life, the bizarre and rollercoaster world of rock 'n' roll and how sometimes fate deals a hand that slaps you right in the face.

Neil McCormick is really a small fish in a sea of sharks and his decision making is the worst since Adolf Hitler's parents decided to buy a bottle



Ben Barnes starring in Neil McCormick's Killing Bono

of Riesling instead of a condom and even when redemption stares him in the face he still manages to mess things up.

Killing Bono is not a laugh out loud kind of film but it's well worth watching and does have some great one liners such as: "You can't boo me, I went to Eton."

Killing Bono is out now.

THE PANIC IN NEEDLE PARK (18)



Kitty Winn and Al Pacino star in The Panic in Needle Park

This little known early outing for Al Pacino is a gritty, reality-style film which shows the seedy sub-culture of drugs, prostitution and crime.

The Panic was banned in the UK until recently for its graphic portrayal of drug use some of which, even 40 years on, is still uncomfortable to watch.

Pacino is Bobby a drug user, dealer and hustler who hooks up with Helen played by Kitty Winn. She is drawn into the world of Pacino's charismatic character being introduced to pimps, prostitutes, addicts, pushers and criminals like some bizarre networking exercise.

The Panic is filmed without a music soundtrack in a Ken Loach-style realism and is as seedy and uncompromising as contemporaries such as Midnight Cowboy or Serpico.

Throughout the film Pacino shows the brooding style and acting talent which went on to earn him the part in The Godfather.

This is not your usual Hollywood fare – there are no heroes or villains and no happy endings.

Surviving

This stripped-back look at how this subculture goes about surviving day to day, living hand to mouth and for the next fix, hustling anyone and everyone is just presented as a way of life.

As Helen is exposed to the darker side of Bobby's life which is constantly overshadowed by the local police determined to bust the drugs rings, she is dragged down into her own addiction and prostitution eventually selling out everything she values, even Bobby.

Be warned this is not a feel-good film but it is a stark warning of a whole strata of society which exists but most people choose to ignore until it spills over into their comfort zone.

Extras include, interviews with director Jerry Schatzberg and writer Joan Didion.

The Panic in Needle Park was due for release September 5.
Danny Farragher

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James Grove founded the firm back in 1857



Factory staff in the early 1950s gather for a photograph after what appears to be some kind of presentation



Andrew Bytheway - buttons made from buffalo horn

Button king fastened on to a winning idea

From soldiers fighting in the First World War to postmen and railway conductors – all of them had smart uniforms with shiny buttons.

James Grove and Sons supplied buttons to the Ministry of Defence, British Railways and the General Post Office and the firm's history can be traced back to making buttons during the American Civil War of 1861.

Still based on Stourbridge Road in Halesowen, the company was founded in 1857 by James Grove who started off with just a horse and trap. In the early 1900s he travelled across Europe selling horn buttons from his hotel room.

Now old photographs and artefacts from the factory have been handed over to staff at Dudley Archives and they give a snapshot of the factory in the 1950s and 60s.

Curator Andy Bytheway says it is wonderful to have such a rare collection of buttons in the archives.

"There are not many of these buttons left and so it is great to have such an extensive collection," he says. "Not only do we have some of the pieces that were manufactured at the factory, but also pictures of the workers and the founder James Grove."

James Grove served his apprenticeship with William Harris, who had a button factory at Spring Hill, which quickly became the largest and best equipped horn button factory in

Britain. James and his wife Ann Elizabeth set up their business in premises rented from Ann's father, but in 1865 this proved to be too small and so they decided to build the Bloomfield Works on Stourbridge Road.

The company employed about 600 men and women. Today, it employs around 40 people using sophisticated machinery and polishing techniques.

Reputation

Andy says: "When James Grove died in 1886 the reputation of the company as makers of first quality horn buttons was firmly established. When visiting the Bloomfield Works in the 1950s people would have seen the long line of storage sheds piled high with sacks of horns and hoofs."

"The horns and hoofs were the raw

material used to make buttons – and any that were rejected were ground down to make fertiliser, so nothing was wasted."

Pieces of horn were put into steam heated presses to make them flat and then button blanks were cut out by machines. Andy says: "Then workers had to match up the buttons as, when they were spread out on a glass table and illuminated from beneath, at least four shades could be revealed. The buttons were then cut to the desired shape, holes were drilled and then they were polished."

The process today is still similar and some work is still done by hand. In 2006 the company moved into a brand new purpose-built manufacturing unit at Stourbridge Road and it now exports to most countries.



Grove's Bloomfield Works in Stourbridge Road which at one time had 600 workers

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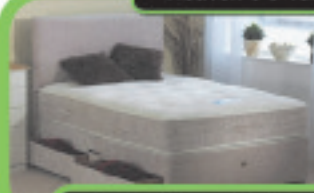
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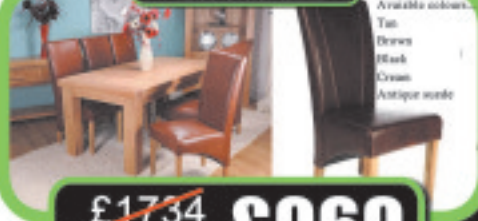
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Neil Toon stars as Warner



Dave Willetts - professor

Award-winning act from the girl showing her blonde ambition

OMG! Blockbuster West End and Broadway musical Legally Blonde The Musical is coming to the Midlands as part of its first UK tour.

Faye Brookes will be proving blondes really do have more fun – and aren't as dumb as some claim – when she stars as Elle Woods in the comedy musical that remains one of the hottest tickets in London's theatre land.

Based on the Hollywood movie starring Reese Witherspoon, it tells of a pink-loving prom queen who hits the books when her boyfriend, Warner, drops her for someone more serious. Soon she is heading for Harvard Law School, accompanied by her faithful chihuahua Bruiser, ready to confound prejudices.

The show is directed by award-winning director and choreographer Jerry Mitchell, who also

brought Hairspray to the stage, and Manchester actress Faye Brooks comes to the starring role after a spell in Grease in the West End.

She is joined by experienced musical actress Claire Sweeney, formerly of Brookside and who recently toured Andrew Lloyd Webber's revived Tell Me On A Sunday, as Paulette. Neil Toon, from Hollyoaks and a spell in Les Misérables, will play Warner. West End veteran Dave Willetts plays professor Callahan. Iwan Lewis, from Fame in the West End, will play Emmett.

The sassy spectacular opens at Hanley's Regent Theatre in Stoke-on-Trent on September 20, where it will run until October 1. Then the show has a run in Birmingham at the New Alexandra Theatre from October 4 to 12.

For tickets at Stoke call the box office on 0844 871 7649 and at Birmingham 0844 871 3011, or go to the theatres' websites.



Faye Brooks takes the leading role for the Birmingham shows



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| All served with Chips and Beans | |

Desserts

All Desserts from £2.45
Please see Specials Board

Traditional Sunday Roasts served between 12 noon and 3.00 pm

All our Roasts are served with Vegetables, New Potatoes, Homemade Roasts, Mashed Potatoes & Best Gravy

Book early - don't be disappointed!
Only £5.95
Children under 10 £3.95

From Monday 12th September we are introducing our

SPECIALS NIGHT

Monday Grill & Drink
only £5.95, choose from
5oz Rump or 8oz Gammon or
Cajun Chicken or
Bourbon Pork Steak

Tuesday & Wednesday
6 pm-8.30 pm
Specials from £2.49

Thursday
Curry Night
& A Drink £5.95

Friday Fish Night
Special
only £5.50

HOMEMADE SPECIALS

2 Courses £4.45
Choose from: Cottage Pie, Liver & Bacon, Pie of the Day & Dessert
Tuesday to Saturday
12 noon until 2 pm

the pulse

Monday

BBC1 6.00 Breakfast 6.15 Operation...
BBC2 6.00 Breakfast 6.15 Operation...
ITV1 6.00 Breakfast 6.15 Operation...
ITV2 6.00 Breakfast 6.15 Operation...

Tuesday

BBC1 6.00 Breakfast 6.15 Operation...
BBC2 6.00 Breakfast 6.15 Operation...
ITV1 6.00 Breakfast 6.15 Operation...
ITV2 6.00 Breakfast 6.15 Operation...

Wednesday

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ITV2 6.00 Breakfast 6.15 Operation...

Thursday

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| Torquay RAINBOW HOTEL | MON 12 SEP | 5 £229.95 | £149.95 |
| York & Scarborough | FRI 16 SEP | 3 £89.95 | £79.95 |
| London Theatre GHOST/PHANTOM | SAT 17 SEP | 2 £129.95 | £99.95 |
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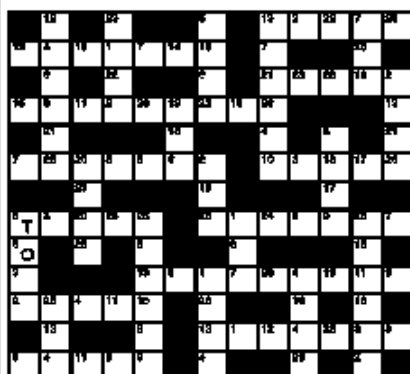
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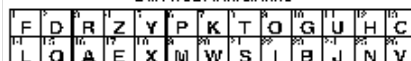
No.132

Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION



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Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

Cryptic Clues:

Across

1. Say your piece? (6)
4. Recognised Owl (11)
9. Intends to become religious? (4,2,7)
10. Grotches Reginald with drinks? (7)
11. It's returned before the bar (5)
12. A number 11 to be commended (5)
14. Follow but walk nearby (5)
18. Soundbite of some colossal volume (5)
19. Seating is never enough with such chairs (7)
21. Unlikely to keep out of trouble long? (5)
22. Run and see, perhaps, to make certain (6)
23. It's used to bring down, or lift up (6)

Down

1. Do they always give straight decisions? (6)
2. What I should have done, were I in your position! (7,6)
3. Not qualified to sum up (5)
5. You're meant to put an arm in it (7)
6. It currently shows the time (8,5)
7. Engine gives out before the Spanish final (6)
8. Humble sailor on a rough sea (5)
13. He's slow but sure (7)
15. Get out a piece of the lighting equipment (6)
16. Signs in at the women's hotel (5)
17. Mainland there's some body in the bus (6)
20. Mixes play with a broken colour (5)

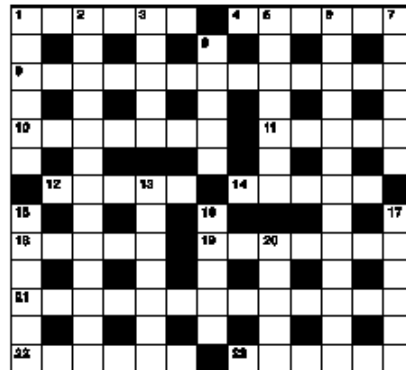
Quick Clues:

Across

1. Felling (6)
4. Finched (6)
9. Mistake in setting out (5,5)
10. Confused by bill (6)
11. Greet (5)
12. Fry (5)
14. Store (5)
18. Store house (5)
19. Fettered (7)
21. Calm (13)
22. Long seat (6)
23. Fished (6)

Down

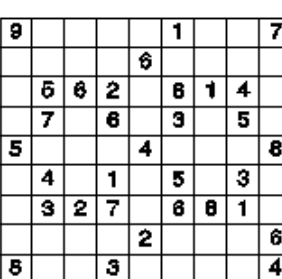
1. Resolve (6)
2. Centigrade (8,5)
3. Cold (5)
5. Not precise (7)
6. Of the works (13)
7. Skatell (6)
8. Coworker (5)
13. Result (7)
15. Modified (6)
16. Player (5)
17. Muddled (6)
20. Pale (5)



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS:
CRYPTIC: Across: 1. And raincoat, 2. Grotches, 3. Grotches, 4. Grotches, 5. Grotches, 6. Grotches, 7. Grotches, 8. Grotches, 9. Grotches, 10. Grotches, 11. Grotches, 12. Grotches, 13. Grotches, 14. Grotches, 15. Grotches, 16. Grotches, 17. Grotches, 18. Grotches, 19. Grotches, 20. Grotches, 21. Grotches, 22. Grotches, 23. Grotches.
QUICK: Across: 1. Felling, 2. Centigrade, 3. Cold, 4. Not precise, 5. Of the works, 6. Skatell, 7. Coworker, 8. Result, 9. Modified, 10. Player, 11. Muddled, 12. Pale, 13. Result, 14. Coworker, 15. Modified, 16. Player, 17. Muddled, 18. Pale, 19. Fettered, 20. Long seat, 21. Calm, 22. Long seat, 23. Fished.

Sudoku

Fill in the grid below so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.



Circlegram

Replace the question mark with a letter so that the letters within each circle can be arranged to form words on a crossword theme. What are the five words, and the letter represented by the question mark?



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The self-drive break is for one evening staying either on performance: for Friday night you will have a top price ti for a reasonable supplement (subject to availability).

* The "from" price and price bands vary for each show - see b

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HALESOWEN, FAIRFIELD ROAD

A unique opportunity to rent this stunning 4 bedrooms detached home in central Halesowen, comprising of: Four Bedrooms, Two Large Lounges, Beautiful Fitted Kitchen with Built in Appliances, Stunning Bathroom with Separate Shower Cabinet, En-Suite to Master Bedroom, Gas Central Heating, Part Double Glazing, Private Rear Garden, Off Road Parking

£1100 PCM



OLDBURY, WINDSOR ROAD

A period style, fully refurbished detached home, minutes away from J2 M5, and close to rail and bus links to the city centre, comprises of: Three Good Sized Bedrooms, Two Reception Rooms with Feature Fire Surrounds, Stunning Breakfast Kitchen, Modern Bathroom with Shower, Gas Central Heating, Part Double Glazing, Front and Rear Gardens, Driveway Parking and Garage. A MUST SEE PROPERTY

£775 PCM



HALESOWEN, DOWNING STREET

An immaculately presented and recently modernised semi-detached home, centrally located in Halesowen town centre, comprising of: Three Good Sized Bedrooms with Fitted Wardrobes, Fitted Kitchen with White Goods, Stunning Lounge and Separate Dining Room, Family Bathroom with Shower, Overstairs WC, Gas Central Heating, Double Glazed, Driveway Parking, Large Rear Garden, Part Furnished. A MUST SEE PROPERTY

£725 PCM



ROWLEY REGIS, DOVEY GROVE

A modern unfurnished three storey townhouse, in a convenient position, briefly comprising of: Fitted Dining Kitchen, Two Reception Rooms, Utility, Downstairs Shower Room, Four Bedrooms, Master Bedroom with En-Suite, House Bathroom, Garage and Driveway, Gardens

£725 PCM



HALESOWEN, SUMMERFIELDS AVENUE

Ideally located in Hurst Green, close to popular school, motorway access and commutable to Birmingham, is this lovely semi-detached home, briefly comprising of: Three Large Bedrooms, Two Spacious Reception Rooms, Modern Fitted Kitchen, Family Bathroom with Shower, Front and Rear Gardens, Driveway Parking and Garage

£695 PCM



BEARWOOD, WIGORN ROAD

Ideally located for commuting to Birmingham, and close to Warley Woods, is this mid-terrace home, comprising of: Two Bedrooms and a Study, Living Room, Fitted Kitchen, Shower Room, Outside WC, Double Glazing, Gas Central Heating, On Road, Parking, Unfurnished

£650 PCM



HALESOWEN, WROXLEY HOUSE, OFFMOOR LANE

Luxury Living in Hayley Green. A superb, brand new luxury apartment, offering spacious accommodation including: Open Plan Lounge/Kitchen and Dining with French Doors to Balcony, Two Double Bedrooms, Master with En-Suite, Further Well Appointed Bedroom, Gas Central Heating, Double Glazing and Allocated Parking.

£625 PCM



HAGLEY, MILL POOL CLOSE

Located in a peaceful location with lovely views is this unfurnished luxury ground floor apartment, briefly comprising of: Gas Central Heating, Through Lounge/Dining Room with Views Across Open Countryside, Fitted Kitchen, Two Double Bedrooms, Bathroom with Shower & Separate WC, Communal Gardens, Parking Space and Garage

£595 PCM



OLDBURY, LINKS CRESCENT

Set in a quiet location and having been newly decorated, is this lovely unfurnished mid-terrace home. Comprising of: Three Bedrooms, Very Large Lounge, Fitted Kitchen with Washing Machine, Shower Room, Double Glazing, Gas Central Heating, Front and Rear Gardens, Driveway Parking

£595 PCM



STOURBRIDGE, THE PUMHOUSE

This luxury modern furnished first floor apartment briefly comprises of: One Double Bedroom, Stunning Open Plan Lounge, High Spec Fitted Kitchen, Bathroom with Shower, Electric Storage Heating, Parking Space.

£575 PCM



HALESOWEN, WILTSHIRE DRIVE

Located on the Horner Hill Estate, is this well present semi-detached home, briefly comprising of: Three Bedrooms with Fitted Wardrobes, Spacious Lounge, Dining Room, Family Bathroom with Shower, Double Glazing, Gas Central Heating, Front and Rear Gardens, Driveway Parking, Unfurnished

£575 PCM



HALESOWEN, LODGEFIELD ROAD

An unfurnished semi detached house, on a popular road, briefly comprising of: Gas Central Heating, Living Room, Fitted Kitchen, Conservatory, Two Bedrooms, Shower Room, Front & Rear Gardens, Driveway Parking

£525 PCM



EDGEBASTON, SHOOTERS CLOSE

Set in a quiet cul-de-sac, a stones throw away from Cathorpe Park, is this Semi-detached home, comprising of: Two Double Bedrooms, Large Lounge, Large Kitchen, Family Bathroom, Brand New Double Glazing, Gas Central Heating, Driveway Parking, Garage, Front and Rear Gardens

£525 PCM



HALESOWEN, HIGHLAND HOUSE

Located just off Long Lane, is the very large, fully refurbished first floor flat, comprising of: Two Large Bedrooms, New Fitted Kitchen, Modern Bathroom with Shower, Double Glazing, Gas Central Heating, Allocated Parking, Garage, Communal Gardens

£525 PCM



HALESOWEN, BLOOMFIELD STREET NORTH

An extremely well presented two bedroomed end terrace house being situated within easy access to Halesowen town, briefly comprising of: Lounge with Feature Fireplace, Kitchen/Diner, Large Conservatory, Two Bedrooms, First Floor Family Bathroom, Charming Rear Garden, Gas Central Heating and Partial Double Glazing, On Road Parking. Internal Inspection is Highly Recommended. Unfurnished

£525 PCM



CRADLEY HEATH, PEAR TREE LANE

This lovely unfurnished modern ground floor apartment, located in a popular area, and close to local train station and buses, comprises of: Gas Central Heating, Living Room, Fitted Kitchen, Two Bedrooms with Fitted Wardrobes, Bathroom with Shower, Rear Garden, Parking Space

£475 PCM



HALESOWEN, CLENT HOUSE

This spacious top floor flat, with superb views, and in a popular location, briefly comprises of: Warm Air Heating, Large Living Room, Fitted Kitchen, Two Bedrooms, Bathroom with Shower, Garage, Unfurnished

£475 PCM



NETHERTON, ST GEORGES ROAD

This lovely unfurnished first floor flat, situated in a quiet area, comprises of: Electric Storage Heating, Living Room, Fitted Kitchen, Double Bedroom, Bathroom with Shower, Rear Garden, Parking space

£395 PCM



HALESOWEN, STOURBRIDGE ROAD

A 2 bed unfurnished flat above a shop and within walking distance of town centre comprising of living room, dining kitchen, 2 bedrooms, shower room, gas central heating, double glazing, parking space and rear garden.

£395 PCM



QUINTON, NAYLORS CLOSE

Situated in a quiet cul-de-sac, and close to the M5, this unfurnished ground floor apartment comprises of: Electric Storage Heating, Living Room, Fitted Kitchen, Double Bedroom, Bathroom with Shower, Parking Space

£395 PCM



HALESOWEN, NETHEREND LANE

On this popular development, is this unfurnished ground floor flat, briefly comprising of: Electric Storage Heating, Living Room, Fitted Kitchen, Double Bedroom, Bathroom with Shower, Communal Garden, Garage

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Priced around £69,950, this first-floor flat in Chapel Court, Pensnett, is now on the market

Flat may suit a first time buyer

Ideal for the first-time buyer or single person, this modern first-floor flat is for sale based on offers around £69,950.

Convenient for all local facilities, the flat in Chapel Court, Pensnett, has a hall lounge, modern bathroom and kitchen and bedroom – as well as parking.

The living room is 14ft 4in by 10ft 5in, while the kitchen measures 11ft 8in by 8ft and comes with a range of base and eye level units with rolled-edge work surfaces, stainless steel sink, integrated electric oven, hob and extractor and plumbing for automatic washing machine.

Communal

The double bedroom is 11ft 9in by 9ft 9in and has a range of fitted

wardrobes and double glazed window to the front, while the bathroom has a white suite comprising panel bath with shower over, low flush WC, pedestal hand wash basin and tiled walls.

The property stands in lawned communal grounds and there is a communal parking area.

For more details call Taylors on 01384 265265.



In the kitchen there is a range of base and eye-level units, electric oven, hob and extractor

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| DEVON ROAD, BEARWOOD NEW <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 bed extended 3 story double fronted home 3 large reception rooms with extension to rear 12ft breakfast kitchen, utility room & d/s WC Master bedroom with en-suite shower room 3 further double bedrooms, study area & bathroom 17ft integral garage & driveway to front £299,950 Ref: D1091 | HOWLEY GRANGE ROAD, HALESOWEN NEW <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extended semi-det 3 bed home in sought after area UPVC conservatory & 2 separate reception rooms Fitted kitchen & 12ft fitted utility room & garage Large lawned rear garden with private aspect Garage & blockpaved gated driveway UPVC double glazed, GCH & security system £240,000 Ref: D1098 | LONG LANE, HALESOWEN NEW <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extended traditional style 3 bed detached home Lounge & extended living/dining room to rear Extended refitted kitchen & downstairs WC Large enclosed gardens to rear (not overlooked) Off road parking & garden to front & det garage Benefiting majority UPVC DBG & fitted with GCH £184,950 Ref: D1106 |
| WOODBURY CLOSE, HALESOWEN NEW <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detached home in pleasant cul-de-sac Kitchen with separate breakfast room Lounge/diner overlooking rear garden 3 bedrooms & family bathroom GCH & majority double glazing Integral garage & driveway £174,950 Ref: D903 | SUMMERFIELDS AVENUE, HALESOWEN NEW <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Much improved 3 bed semi detached home Situated in popular residential area of Hurst Green Refitted kitchen with separate utility area & WC Dining room & lounge with double doors to garden Three bedrooms & refitted bathroom (sep shower) UPVC DBG, fascias & soffits & gas central heating £159,950 Ref: D1107 | WOLVERHAMPTON ROAD, OLDBURY NEW <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traditional semi-det home with scope for extending 15ft lounge & separate 14ft dining room Kitchen leading to side area & downstairs WC 3 bedrooms, bathroom & WC on first floor Garage & driveway giving off road parking Majority UPVC double glazing & GCH £149,950 Ref: D1103 |
| BARSTON ROAD, OLDBURY NEW <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extended semi detached 3 bed home 23ft lounge diner & refitted kitchen Utility /sun room - UPVC & brick construction Large southerly rear garden with vehicular access UPVC double glazing & gas central heating Well presented home - must be viewed £144,950 Ref: D1096 | PENNINE WAY, STOURBRIDGE NEW <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Much improved 2 bed semi detached home Situated on popular Penfields development Refitted dining kitchen, lounge & conservatory Refitted bathroom with separate shower cubicle Driveway with parking & access to garage Benefiting UPVC DBG & GCH (combi boiler) £134,950 Ref: D1105 | SHRUBLANDS AVENUE, OLDBURY NEW <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traditionally style 3 bed semi in cul-de-sac 15ft 10 lounge & kitchen diner to rear Three bedrooms & family bathroom UPVC double glazing & gas central heating Off road parking to front Large gardens to rear £120,000 Ref: D1109 |
| CLAY LANE, OLDBURY NEW <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extended modern home with garage & conservatory Fitted kitchen to front & downstairs WC Lounge leading to 10ft conservatory/dining rm 2 double bedrooms & bathroom with shower UPVC double glazing & gas central heating Garage (with power & light) & driveway £119,950 Ref: D1111 | ST. MATTHEWS ROAD, OLDBURY NEW <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extended semi-det home requiring completion of works 3/4 beds on first floor with family bathroom 17ft lounge & 11ft 7 separate dining room 12ft breakfast kitchen, study & downstairs WC Driveway leads to unfinished garage & utility UPVC double glazing & gas central heating £119,950 Ref: D1101 | GILES ROAD, OLDBURY NEW <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 bed terraced home with driveway 16ft dining kitchen with fitted oven/hob 16ft lounge with flame effect gas fire UPVC double glazing & gas central heating Driveway giving off road parking at front Paved rear garden with large shed £99,995 Ref: D1099 |
| BUNDLE HILL, HALESOWEN NEW <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spacious duplex apartment close to town centre 2 double bedrooms, outside terrace off master 18ft 8 lounge diner & separate kitchen Bathroom & separate WC Garage giving off road parking or storage No upward chain - vacant possession £69,950 Ref: D1104 | BISHOPS WALK, HALESOWEN BORDER NEW PRICE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Five bedroom home with double garage No upward chain - vacant possession Lounge, sep dining room & study Breakfast kitchen, utility room & d/s WC Master bed with en-suite shower room Fitted with UPVC d/g & GCH £279,950 Ref: D1001 | SHENSTONE VALLEY ROAD, HALESOWEN NEW PRICE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modernised & extended detached family home Refitted 16ft kitchen & refitted downstairs wc Refitted bathroom (white suite) & 3 bedrooms UPVC double glazing & soffits fitted & GCH 16ft garage & gravelled driveway for off road parking No upward chain - vacant possession £179,950 Ref: D1066 |
| MASTERS LANE, HALESOWEN NEW PRICE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deceptively spacious 3 bed family home Breakfast kitchen, lounge & dining rm Downstairs WC - integral garage Blockpaved off road parking to front Enclosed rear garden Majority UPVC d/g & GCH £129,950 Ref: D943 | BODENHAM ROAD, OLDBURY NEW PRICE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Semi detached home with off road parking Vacant possession - no upward chain Lounge, spacious kitchen/diner & lean to conservatory Three bedrooms & bathroom on first floor Well proportioned & enclosed rear garden with patio Benefitting upvc double glazing & gas central heating £119,950 Ref: D1062 | FELDON LANE, HALESOWEN NEW PRICE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Superbly presented two bed end terrace Fitted with UPVC d/g, GCH & alarm Lounge, dining room with conservatory off Fitted kitchen & downstairs bathroom Low maintenance courtyard style garden Internal inspection essential £104,950 Ref: D1074 |

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Fresh new look for Exeo

SEAT's executive class Exeo saloon and ST estate range is getting a new look, and some important new engineering upgrades.

The revised Exeo 'face' with new bi-xenon headlights and stunning LED daytime running lights (standard on Sport, optional on SE), will make its public debut in the metal at the forthcoming Frankfurt Motor Show.

The styling enhancements, boosted by smart new alloy wheel designs, further underline the high value Exeo range's premium look.

Upgrades

Upgrades to interior materials – including upgraded leather on the steering wheel and revised upholstery – create a matching premium feel.

Meanwhile, improvements to the high quality SEAT saloon and estate's 2.0 TDI common rail powerplant now see emissions cut to as little as 129 g/km.

Economy is similarly improved, too, with the Exeo saloon now being capable of as

much as 57.6 mpg on the EU's combined cycle. The latest upgrades to the Exeo come hard on the heels of the arrival of a new gearbox option earlier this year, with the addition of a smooth, efficient Multitronic auto/sequential manual gearbox further underlining the luxurious SEAT's executive appeal.

The Multitronic 'box – with its CVT-based technology and stepped 'changes' – offers both full auto mode and the option of sequential shifts via the sporty, steering wheel-mounted shift paddles.

Looking to 2012, the Exeo family is in for further upgrades with the addition for the first time of SEAT's effortless Start/Stop technology on an Ecomotive model, which will help deliver even more fuel efficiency.

SEAT is targeting an ambitious CO2 figure of less than 120 g/km for the Start/Stop-equipped Exeo which will, of course, enhance its appeal to both environmentally-conscious private buyers and UK fleet managers who demand such low emissions levels from even their executive models.

The Exeo's eye-catching styling changes, allied to SEAT's ongoing commitment to improving quality while simultaneously cutting its cars' emissions and improving

fuel economy, are sure to generate further interest in the range.

It is now the Spanish brand's third best-seller in the UK behind the Ibiza supermini and sporty Leon five-door family hatch.

The upgrades to the Exeo should boost both the emotional and rational appeal of the range.

SEAT UK managing director Peter Wyhinny said: "The arrival of the Exeo marked SEAT's debut in a new and hard-fought market segment, and the success of the fleet-friendly saloon and estate range is already clear.

Crowds

"Now, with this great new look and impressive engineering changes I'm sure the Exeo will draw the crowds to both our Frankfurt show stand and, in due course, our UK dealerships."

The Exeo range is offered with a choice of three frugal turbodiesels or one potent turbocharged petrol engine.

Cars in the range are priced from £19,285.

Full details on the entire SEAT range, together with a sophisticated car configurator, are available at www.seat.co.uk



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Planes, trains and automobiles at the 2011 Goodwood Revival

EXCEPTIONAL cars and extraordinary aircraft are a regular treat at the annual Goodwood Revival, being held this year from September 16 to 18.

However, trains are a far less common sight at the world's most authentic historic motor sport meeting – until now!

Trains will be very much in evidence as a trio of blushing brides walk down the aisle in full period wedding dress at the 'St. Charles Chapel of Love,' as Goodwood stages three mock weddings from the 1948-1966 Revival era.

A gaggle of Goodwood's GAG Actors will be playing their parts in the wedding ceremonies and receptions at the main Revival pedestrian entrance gate, as a series of brides and grooms attempt to tie the knot, with mixed degrees of success.

Characters

The Revival wedding party characters will form part of the 80-strong troop of GAG (Goodwood Actors Guild) actors and actresses, all carefully selected to add a sense of theatre to the Revival, following an exhaustive round of auditions. These actors all become members of GAG, set up specifically to add to the authentic atmosphere of the Revival.

The Goodwood Revival gives a chance for all visitors to revel in the romance of motor racing as it used to be.

The lovingly restored Goodwood Motor Circuit is

unchanged from its glory in its heyday, and great lengths are taken to ensure that everything on the site is exactly as it was.

All Goodwood staff and GAG members dress in appropriate period clothing from the 1940s, 50s and 60s, and each year the vast majority of competitors and spectators get into the effervescent Goodwood spirit by dressing the part, considering it all part of the fun.

All around the Goodwood Motor Circuit site, there are many actors, role-playing and acting out scenes from a bygone era. Spivs selling nylons and watches from beneath their coats; Mods and Rockers hanging out and dancing, then being 'moved on' by the local bobbies; comedic workmen preparing to dig a hole in the most inappropriate place; iconic figures, Butlin's Redcoats, and even the Dad's Army Home Guard are all to be found at the Revival.

Other GAG members act as airline captains, with a string of adoring air hostesses in tow, whilst reporters and photographers chase the playboy set for the latest scoop, oblivious to the 'happy campers' munching on their Scotch eggs and tea cakes beside their 1950s caravans. There's sure to be much more fun in store over the three fabulous days of the Goodwood Revival this year.

To order advance tickets for 2011 Goodwood Revival, please contact the Ticket Hotline: telephone: 01243 755055, or email: ticket.office@goodwood.com or book on-line: www.goodwood.com/motorsport



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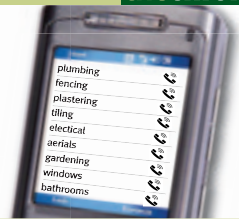
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sport

YELTZ TASTE FIRST DEFEAT OF SEASON

HALESOWEN TOWN 0 CINDERFORD TOWN 1

Halesowen tasted defeat for the first time this season in a lacklustre display at home to Cinderford.

The Yeltz were looking to build on a fine start to the season and visiting goalkeeper Ben John had to race from his goal to clear from both Nathan Jackson and Justin Nisbett in the second minute.

Naveed Arshad struck just wide a minute later, before the same player hit an 11th minute effort at John. Nisbett then surged forward to supply Jackson, but his ball across goal just evaded Arshad as Halesowen's bright start went unrewarded.

As the visitors settled into the game home goalkeeper Paul Evans collected a free-kick from Matt Barnes and then punched clear from Dean Lee after 22 minutes.

Nisbett went closest for Halesowen with a decent chance in each half and his shot from the left hit the outside base of the post after half an hour.

Scrappy

But the Foresters snatched victory with a goal four minutes into the second half after a period of scrappy midfield play. A long ball forward split the home defence, allowing Mike Whittington to take the ball around Evans to score.

Nisbett was quieter after the break but again had the best Halesowen chance of the second period when he shrugged off the visiting defence to blast just wide of John's post.

Disjointed Halesowen struggled to make any further impression and the rest of the game became a sluggish non-event.

Not even a double substitution could inject any urgency or fluidity into Halesowen's play and Lewis Sommers netted again for Cinderford, although his effort was ruled out by the assistant referee.

With four minutes remaining Arshad shot straight at John and frustrated Halesowen collected more unwanted yellow cards in the closing stages as the bank holiday crowd went home disappointed.

MANGOTSFIELD UNITED 2 HALESOWEN TOWN 3

The Yeltz ran up an impressive victory at much-fancied Mangotsfield. The game pitted Yeltz boss Shaun Cunningham against his former Wrexham teammate – current Mangotsfield manager Phil Bate – and it was Cunningham who came out on top in an entertaining encounter.

The Yeltz went hunting for goals from the off with an attacking line-up, leading to an open game with plenty of chances.

In the early exchanges Naveed Arshad hit a speculative drive wide, before Dean Griffiths shot over the Halesowen bar at the other end.

Halesowen striker Justin Nisbett then burst through by embarking on a run from his own half and exchanged passes with Arshad before shooting just wide.

The Halesowen pressure paid off in the 16th minute when Nisbett's cross from the right found Anthony Bruce, who looped a header beyond Mangotsfield keeper Chris Humphries.

The Mangos responded well though and, after Mitchel Page and Gary Colbourne went close, they threatened when Lee Marshall sent a bullet header past Paul Evans.

Home goalkeeper Humphries came away the worse for wear after a challenge with Yeltz centre-forward Nathan Jackson and had struggle on with a leg injury for the rest of the game.

Four minutes before half time Gavin Saunders took advantage to restore Halesowen's lead, collecting a loose ball and unleashing a tremendous 20-yard drive that pinged into the net.

Halesowen's impressive performance yielded a third goal in the 55th minute when Arshad beat the hobbling Humphries to a long ball forward and tapped into an empty net.

But Mangotsfield made Halesowen sweat in the final stages by pulling another goal back.

David Johnson

Tivs show what the goal is four

Tivdale continued their fine start to the season in the Midland Football Alliance with another impressive home performance.

This time it was against a Willenhall Town team that never recovered from conceding an early goal and were very much second best in all departments for most of the game.

The home team opened the better on Monday. Danny Campbell took full advantage of a blunder by the visitors' keeper, who lost the ball when put under

TIVIDALE 4 WILLENHALL TOWN 0

pressure in the air by Matt Jukes, to open the scoring after just four minutes.

Adam Hill increased Tivdale's lead on 10 minutes when he hit a tremendous right foot shot low and hard into the net when one of a number of Willenhall's desperate clearances fell to him on the edge of the box.

It took 20 minutes for the visitors to mount their first real effort on goal.

Tivdale's goalkeeper James Trevalan

had to go down low to save a good effort. Messamo replaced the injured Kyle Hill at half time.

Tivdale increased their lead on 72 minutes when Swann rose unmarked to head home at the far post after good work between Messumo and Trumpeter.

Danny Campbell was replaced by Chris Russell.

He wasted no time in unsettling the Willenhall defenders and the team were rewarded on 90 minutes when he crossed for Swann to bag his second goal.

Batters hand a hammering to Old Hill side

OLD HILL CRICKET CLUB
Brockhampton (24 points) 255-8 beat Old Hill (3 points) 83 by 172 runs.

The First XI game in Herefordshire against Brockhampton could not start on time due to the overnight rain.

Having won the toss Old Hill decided to bowl and the hosts' hammered the visitors attack to all parts of the ground as they ran up a formidable total of 255-8 wickets off 50 overs with Adam Hewlett scoring 109.

The most successful Old Hill bowler was Ashraf Hussain with 3-95 from 15 overs. In reply, the visitors' openers got off to a slow start and with 26 runs off 10 overs, Mike Hingley (11) was trapped lbw. Fellow opener Danny Cox (18) went on to top score as Old Hill were bowled out for a paltry 83 runs in the 37th over to be beaten by a massive 172 runs. They remain in fourth position in the table.

Old Hill (5 points) Knowle & Dorridge (5 points) Match Abandoned

The start of the Second XI game against Knowle & Dorridge at Haden Hill was delayed due to the previous night's thunderstorms but after a further heavy shower the match was abandoned without a ball being bowled.

Old Hill (9 points) 263-6 dec. drew with Claverley (14 points) 245 - 7.

The Third XI played hosts to Claverley at Wassall Grove in their vital final game of the season knowing they needed just three points to clinch the championship following last week's promotion.

So having won the toss, they chose to bat. Having lost an early wicket, Old Hill's veteran Alan Neal (7) was joined by Ollie Moseley (60) and they put together a second wicket stand of 58 before both were removed.

This brought together Reece Shilcock and Steve Derham as the hosts closed in on the 175 runs needed to secure the title. This was accomplished with ease as the partnership blossomed before finally being ended when Shilcock was out for an excellent 87.

Derham continued to prosper before being out for 53 in the 48th over when Captain Maurice Whyte decided to declare with the score on 263-6 wickets.

Claverley needed 206 runs to achieve a winning draw from the 39 overs left. This target was reached as Old Hill took their foot off the pedal.

Claverley (6 points) 152 lost to Old Hill (24 points) 166 by 14 runs.

The Fourth XI travelled to Claverley and having lost the toss were invited to bat by the hosts and managed to post a competitive total of 166 off 42 overs with Ifzaen Khan top scoring with 47 not out. Webster took 4-35 for the hosts.

In reply, Claverley were soon struggling on 63-5 wickets in the 17th over before P Lewis (43 not out) helped guide the hosts to 138 before they lost their 8th wicket but Ifzaen Khan (5-30) and Captain Irshad Ahmed (4-40) kept a tight reign on the Claverley batsmen and they were eventually bowled out for 152 at the end of the 40th.

Old Hill (20 points) 110-0 beat Evesham (0 points) 108 by 10 wickets.

After the disappointing defeat on Saturday, the First XI bounced back at Haden Hill with a comprehensive victory over Evesham.

Having won the toss, Old Hill chose to field and Ed Denham struck in the first over to reduce the visitors to 4-1 wicket. He continued his excellent spell by capturing 2 more wickets in the 8th over before Paul Thomas (28) and George Rhodes (26) put together a determined partnership of 58, ultimately being parted in the 31st over by Ashraf Hussain.

The remaining 5 wickets fell for just 24 runs off a further 12 overs. In reply, the hosts openers Mike Hingley (36 not out) and Captain Nathan Round (67 not out) quickly completed victory for Old Hill in 16.1 overs.

Stratford-upon-Avon (4 points) 83 lost to Old Hill (24 points) 166 by 83 runs.

The Second XI travelled to Swans Nest Lane and having lost the toss were invited to bat first. The Old Hill batsmen found runs hard to come by with only 63 runs on the board at the halfway stage of their innings. However, a good stand between Joe Thorn (20) and Jared Daniels took the visitors score past 100 before Daniels was unfortunately given out lbw at 55.

Derek Griffiths

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Heathens usurped by bottom of table riders

DUDLEY 40 BUXTON 55
by tim Hamblin

A week may be a long time in politics, but a month can be an eternity in speedway.

Exactly a month ago Dudley annexed the National Fours title at Stoke and looked well placed for the play-offs.

Thirty days and six matches later – five of them heavy defeats – confidence is on the floor.

Tuesday night's reversal against bottom of the table Buxton looked inevitable from the very first heat, a comfortable 5-1 to the visitors.

The Heathens reached their nadir in heat 13 when Jon Armstrong's seemingly innocuous fall on the pits turn became something much worse.

The skipper was left struggling to breathe after being struck on the windpipe by his handlebars. He was treated on track for some minutes and was in obvious distress before being taken to hospital – during which time no Dudley rider appeared to go across to check on his welfare.

By contrast, the Hitmen's Robert Branford and Luke Priest – and the latter knows all about serious injuries after spending three months in hospital after a horror crash in 2006 – were quickly on the scene.

Armstrong spent the night in a high-dependency unit at hospital – he has also lost his voice – but was recovering the following day, when he was kept in for observation.

Injuries have played their part in Dudley's woes, depriving them of big

gun Adam Roynon – who travelled from Cumbria by train, on his 23rd birthday, to watch Tuesday night's encounter – and Richard Franklin, a potent threat at reserve.

But there's a deeper malaise at the moment with a young side struggling desperately to break the cycle of losses and its concomitant effect on morale.

Just three heat wins against a side that Dudley had already beaten three times this season tells its own tale.

Dominant

Tom Perry, Ashley Morris and Jamie Courtney had a victory apiece but Buxton, with Adam Allott going through the card and Branford missing out only in the final race when third behind Morris, were dominant.

Their inexperienced reserve Ryan Blacklock, a first-year rider after converting from motocross, had to withdraw from the meeting after two races with flu but was still able to win heat two – his first ever race win. But it was Dudley – and another big turnout of loyal fans – who were left feeling sick.

Dudley: Ashley Morris 12+1, Jamie Courtney 10, Tom Perry 7+1, Danny Stoneman 4+1, Jon Armstrong 4, Darryl Ritchings 3+1, Adam Portwood 0.

Buxton: Adam Allott 15, Robert Branford 12+1, Luke Priest 7+1, Ben Taylor 7+1, Dean Felton 6+1, Paul Burnett 5+1, Ryan Blacklock 3.

Robins knocked for four

STAFFORD TOWN 4 DUDLEY TOWN 1

the ball past Cunningham from the edge of the six yard box on five minutes.

Hassled

Dudley hassled Stafford but did not manage to make any inroads and were punished just two minutes after the half-hour mark.

Agar using his experience to win a penalty from Rob Whitley allowed Matt Dockerty to crash the ball past Cunningham. It was three just five minutes later when again Agar won a free-kick and saw Craig Hulme beat Cunningham.

At half-time Burgess brought on last season's top scorer Dreniz Bala in order to bring the Robins into the game.

The gamble appeared to be paying off when the Croatian chipped the ball over Carl Smith for his first strike of the season on 66 minutes.

Dudley started to get into gear as

they looked to challenge for an unlikely fightback, but their new found optimism was short-lived when Luke Cunningham uprooted the dangerous Agar in the box. Up stepped Dockerty to crash home his second goal of the afternoon with 19 minutes remaining.

Dudley kept up their pressure and only efforts from Bala and substitute Harry Williams were of any note.

The performance capped off a depressing day for fans, although Burgess' side was looking to lift the gloom on Wednesday night with the visit of lowly local rivals Lye Town.

Stafford Town: C. Smith, Dockerty, Bloor (Roman), Bailey (T. Smith), Betts, Price, Morris (Migate), Woodvine, Agar, Hulme, Buckham. Subs not used: Simpson, Ward.

Dudley Town: Cunningham, Jasper (Whittaker), Richards (Williams), Langford, Whitley, Perry (Bala), Cox, Smith, Store, Faux, Warner. Subs not used: Watkins, Cross.

Referee: R. Price



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